

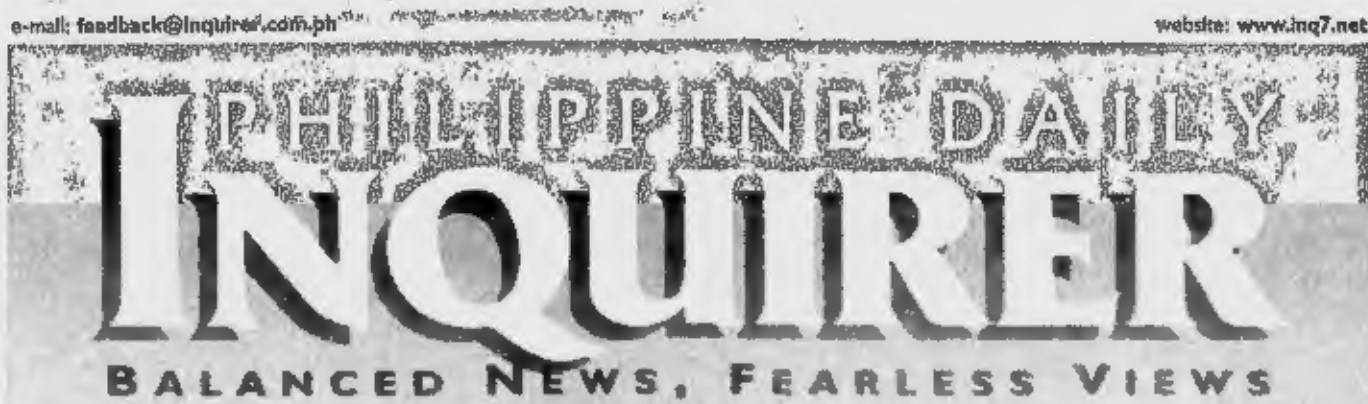
Israeli assault an 'act of indescribable brutality'

BETHLEHEM—Israeli troops ringing the Church of the Nativity exchanged fire early Monday with armed Palestinians holed up in one of Christianity's holiest shrines, and smoke was seen rising from the compound.

A Palestinian policeman who was trying to extinguish the blaze was shot and killed by an Israeli sniper, a fellow policeman in the compound said. The Israeli military said two Israeli soldiers were wounded.

Each side accused the other of causing the fire, which witnesses said burned in the courtyard of St. Katherine's, a Roman Catholic convent adjacent to the Church of the Nativity, built over Jesus' traditional birth.

ISRAELI/A14



Tuesday, April 9, 2002 ★★ 50 pages / 5 sections / vol.17 / no. 120 P15



CONDEMNATION was immediate over the Israeli attack on the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, the spot where Christians believe Jesus was born. The custodians of Catholic sites in the Holy Land called it "a violation of every law of humanity and civilization..."



FR. GIUSEPPE PIERANTONI in Malacañang 12 hours after his kidnappers released him: Already in paradise.

Priest freed, not rescued by police

By the PDI Mindanao Bureau, Carlito Pablo and TJ Burgonio

"A DELIBERATE handover," Italian priest Giuseppe "Beppe" Pierantoni yesterday said of his freedom from his Moro kidnappers contrary to President Macapagal-Arroyo's claim that police had rescued him.

Pierantoni told GMA 7's "Saksi" yesterday in Manila that his release from the Pentagon kidnap-for-ransom group came after negotiations between his abductors and the government.

He said a "commander accompanied" him to a waiting car on a highway and turned him over to the negotiators.

Pierantoni, who spent 171 days in captivity, did not identify the negotiators, but a military official said Norberto Gonzales, presidential adviser on special concerns, was instrumental in the release of the Italian priest.

"He (Gonzales) was the one who brought Pierantoni to Ma-

nila at around 9 a.m. using a private jet," said Brig. Gen. Angel Atutubo, Task Force Giuseppe chief.

Pierantoni said he walked for 12 hours before he was recovered by police authorities at about 2 a.m. yesterday from a forested area in Tungawan town in the newly created province of Zamboanga Sibugay.

PNP Director General Leandro Mendoza said in Malacañang that Pierantoni was recovered at about 2 a.m. following relentless operations by Task Force Mindanao, a special PNP group formed to free the priest.

'A miracle of prayer,' says priest from Bologna

"IT WAS a miracle of prayer," Italian priest Giuseppe "Beppe" Pierantoni said of his release after almost six months of living in the jungles with members of the Pentagon kidnap-for-ransom gang.

"I am particularly happy to be here," Pierantoni said in Malacañang after he was presented to a beaming President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Wearing a sports shirt and gray slacks and needing a shave, Pierantoni said he was "quite healthy" but still "a bit confused and also very tired."

He said he and his captors "lived like monkeys" and ate iguanas and jellyfish during his ordeal in Mindanao.

In an emotional reunion with his colleagues from the Sacred Heart of Jesus order in Manila, a tearful

Pierantoni said he was "already in paradise" 12 hours after his release from the Pentagon kidnap-for-ransom gang.

"Sometimes we lived like monkeys in trees," the 45-year-old Bologna native told AFP, explaining the rebels' attempts to evade capture.

"My enemy in the morning is my business partner at night," looking out for hostile fire, he said.

The missionary said his ordeal was a "very peculiar experience" that exposed him to the plight of impoverished minority Muslims in Mindanao, where his former captors claim to be fighting for independence.

"We lived an extremely simple life. Sometimes, I ate mostly rice, with

'Will you still need me, will you still feed me, when I'm 64?'

MADRID, Spain—UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, taking advantage of his birthday Monday, used lyrics from a classic pop tune to open the UN World Assembly on Aging.

"I turned 64 years old today," he told representatives from 160 nations and international organizations. "I therefore feel empowered to quote the

Beatles' song and ask, on behalf of all older persons: 'Will you still need me, will you still feed me, when I'm 64?'"

"I trust the answer is yes," he added to applause.

Globally, the population of people 60 and older is growing by 2 percent each year, and seniors are expected to outnumber children for the first time in

human history by 2050, according to the latest UN statistics.

Delegates to the week-long assembly are hoping to complete a global document to guide policies for the rapidly graying planet, from providing adequate pensions and affordable health care to preventing discrimination and abuse.

Spanish Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar, whose country already has one of the world's oldest populations, said nations need to promote "active aging" through use of preventive medicine, continued learning and flexible work schedules.

"All that, apart from making good

Maturan dies of heart attack at 61

By Leah Salterio

LEVI CELERIO's "Dinggin" was his all-time favorite. Sung in his signature deep velvety voice, he turned the Tagalog paean into an ultimate plea for love.

Dio medes Maturan, who did not have to be known as the "Perry Como of the Philippines" with "Rose Tattoo" as his anthem because he was an exponent of original Filipino music, died of a heart attack

around midnight on Sunday at the Manila Doctors Hospital. He was 61.

Early Sunday evening Maturan was attending the birthday party of Dr. Peng Oreta in New Manila, Quezon City, according to his son Dominic.

MATAN/A14



Feeling right at home at Palace

By Dona Pazzibugan

A HANDFUL of reporters covering the Malacañang beat, on their way home around 7 p.m. last Sunday, were surprised to see a man and a woman feeling right at home seated on a bench near Gate 6 which fronts Kalayaan Hall.

FEELING/A15

Arlyn can be released for P1M, says Sen. Noli

By Donna S. Cueto and Rocky Nazareno

THE RANSOM demand for hostaged TV reporter Arlyn de la Cruz has reportedly been lowered from P40 million to P11 million, according to broadcaster Sen. Noli De Castro. But De Castro said he was told an initial payment of P1 million would be enough to release De la Cruz.

At a press briefing yesterday, De Castro presented the most recent photo of De la Cruz, which had been taken somewhere in Sulu, and a two-page letter dated April 1 which she had reportedly sent to a sponsor at her wedding.

The photo showed De la Cruz seated and talking with university professor Max Jundam while being guarded by a certain Lakandula, one of those who allegedly abducted her in

ARLYN/A14



"SOMEWHERE in Jolo," Net 25 Journalist Arlyn de la Cruz meets with UP Prof. Dr. Max Jundam.

PVAO owes veterans P17.3 billion in benefits

By Jerry Esplanada

(Last of two parts)

LEONILA Sayson is hopping mad. "I don't know exactly who they are but I think I have a valid reason for being mad at them," said the San Jose City,

THE HUK VETS

An I Team Report

Nueva Ecija, native, now in her 70s.

Sayson, wife of the late Huk guerrilla Agustin Sayson, is talking about the Philippine Veterans Affairs Office (PVAO), based in Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City. In the mid-1990s, she filed a claim with PVAO for old-age

pension as the surviving spouse of a war veteran. She was told, however, that "somebody else—the wife of Agustin Sayson" was already receiving the pension.

"But I'm the wife of Agustin Sayson!"

PVAO/A15

By Christine Avendaño

Crispin Beltran will file another resolution seeking an inquiry into such "pressing consumer issues" as the provisions in the Electric Power Reform Act pertaining to the "unbun-

On top of these resolutions, the House may also investigate the rate hike petition through another resolution filed by Iloilo Rep. Rolex Suplico.

"It's now in the hands of the Senate," said Gonzales.

Bukidnon Rep. Jose Miguel Zubiri, chair of the House committee on legislative franchises, said his committee held a month-long hearing on the Meralco franchise so that it could tackle several issues that were raised against the firm.

Lawyers Marie Yuvienko and Rachel Pastores said in a statement that their clients have decided to take the side of Meralco's 18 million consumers because they believe that the proposed rate increase cannot be justified, was unfair to consumers and inimical to the national interest.

They said the employees have vowed to expose the "manipulative practices and illegal acts" of the Meralco management, even at the risk of losing their jobs.

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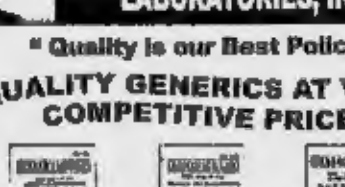
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Corona tops list of SC nominees

By Michael L. Ubac

PRESIDENTIAL chief of staff Renato Corona was a unanimous choice of the Judicial and Bar Council (JBC) to be one of 10 nominees for two vacant seats on the Supreme Court.

All nine members of the JBC chose Corona to be a nominee, from among whom President Macapagal-Arroyo will pick the replacements of two justices who retired recently.

In an April 5 letter to President Macapagal, the JBC, through its ex-officio chair Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr., said: "The JBC has the honor to submit the following nominations for two positions of Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, in the order of the number of votes obtained."

The nominees, after Corona, are Court of Appeals Presiding Justice Maria Alicia Austria-Martinez, CA Associate Justices Candelio C. Garcia, Ruben T. Reyes and Romeo J. Callejo Sr., former Comelec chair and now Sandiganbayan Associate Justice Harriet Demetriou, Sandiganbayan Associate Justice Edilberto G. Sandoval, University of the Philippines law dean Raul C. Pangalangan and lawyers Loreto C. Ata, Ruben F. Balane and Rogelio A. Vinluan.

"The JBC is the body that nominates judges to fill vacancies in the judiciary, from trial judges to associate justices in the Sandiganbayan, the Court of Appeals and the SC."

"The JBC started to accept nominations for the SC after Associate Justices Bernardo Pardo and Arturo Buena retired on Feb. 11 and March 25, respectively."

Senate committee not keen on Cha-cha

By Rocky Nazareno

THE SENATE committee on constitutional amendments, revision of codes and laws and electoral reforms is not too keen on fast-tracking changes to the 1987 Constitution, saying any amendments to the Charter should take into account "the real pulse of the people, not just the views of legal experts and lawmakers."

"Any consensus on whether to change the Charter has to reflect the popular will, the pulse of the heartland, the sentiments at ground level," said committee chair Sen. Edgardo Angara in a statement.

Angara also maintained the committee has already "firmed up its schedule for the short term and this does not include debates on Charter change."

"We cannot afford to rush or short-cut the process," said Angara, underscoring that "Cha-cha means altering the fundamental law of the land." Angara noted that the committee was more inclined toward first finishing the debates on the proposed absentee voting law, which is in its final phase of being passed. Three congressmen who favor Charter change, however, said they prefer a unicameral legislature although they differed on what form the new government should take.

Representatives Raul Gonzalez of Iloilo City, Arthur Defensor of Iloilo's third district and Rolando Sison of the fifth district said a unicameral legislature would be more efficient in making laws than the present bicameral setup. With Raj Padilla, PDI Visayas Bureau

Corona has been President Macapagal's chief of staff (COS) since she was Vice President. When she became chief executive in January last year, Corona was designated presidential spokesperson before being re-appointed COS.

Aside from Davide, the JBC is comprised of Sen. Francisco Pangilinan, Rep. Allan Peter Cayetano, Justice Secre-

tary Hernando Perez, former University of Sto. Tomas law school dean Amado Dimayuga, lawyer Teresita Cruz-Sison, former SC justice Regino Hermosissima, court administrator Presbitero Velasco and ex-CA justice Alfredo Marigomen.

While the SC is looking to add justices, supporters of ousted President Joseph Estrada launched yesterday a

one-million signatures campaign calling for the resignations of Davide and Justices Artemio Panganiban and Antonio Carpio for alleged "politicizing" in the court.

The Estrada loyalists also promised to oppose Davide's purported plan to run for President in 2004. With Philip C. Tubesa and Ma. Griselda Yambot

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Pinoy lost at sea

SINGAPORE—Two men were lost at sea after a tugboat, a barge and a small work boat collided in Singapore waters, the Marine and Port Authority said Monday. The men are believed to be dead.

Local news reports said the men were from Singapore and the Philippines. Coast Guard officials and police said they could

not comment on the reports or provide other details.

The work boat Noelia sank with two people aboard on Sunday morning, the Marine and Port Authority of Singapore said in a news release. Simon Ang, a spokesperson from the port authority, said further details about the incident would be provided later Monday. **AP**

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Abu destruction is Gloria's priority

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday said she has ordered the military to set down as its main priority the destruction of the Abu Sayyaf bandit group and not the rescue of their three hostages.

"The target is the Abu Sayyaf group, not the kidnap victims," Ms Macapagal said during her weekly radio interview.

The Abu Sayyaf is holding hostage American missionary couple Martin and Gracia Burnham, and Filipino nurse Ediborah Yap in the jungles of Basilan.

Ms Macapagal said she had issued the same directive to the Philippine National Police, when she designated the PNP to take the lead role in going after the Pentagon kidnap-for-ransom group that abducted Italian priest Fr. Giuseppe Pierantoni last year.

Pierantoni was recovered by the police early yesterday morning near Tungawan town in the new province of Zamboanga Sibugay.

"What I did with Pierantoni was that I did not set deadlines," the President said. "I told them (the PNP) not to make the priest's rescue as their specific target and instead get the kidnappers first."

Pierantoni was recovered "in the process," she said.

"In other words, the target is not the kidnap victim but the kidnappers," she said. "That's also my instruction with respect to the ASG."

The Armed Forces has deployed at least 5,000 soldiers in Basilan in the hunt for the Abu Sayyaf.

In the same radio interview, Ms Macapagal said she was "open" to the idea of holding a second joint military exercise with the United States in Basilan, the site of the ongoing Balikatan 02-01.

Some 160 American Green Berets have joined frontline government troops hunting down the Abu Sayyaf in Basilan.

The President said that a second exercise, if it is at all, would be dominated by the "civic action component" and specifically directed at the building of a circumferential road for Basilan.

Basilan residents have been clamoring for such a road, whose construction has been impeded by lack of equipment, Ms Macapagal said.

"So if (the United States were to) propose a second Balikatan in Basilan, I'm open to the suggestion," she said.

The President earlier said the ongoing Balikatan has given the AFP enhanced intelligence capabilities, particularly in locating the Abu Sayyaf main force, because of the sophisticated US surveillance equipment. **Carlito Pablo**

Mayor's house raided in hunt for Abu chief

ISABELA CITY—The mayor of Tuburan town in Basilan said he would file charges of human rights violations against the military after his residence was raided yesterday by soldiers pursuing Abu Sayyaf leader Abu Sabaya.

Soldiers from the 18th Infantry Battalion, acting on information that the mayor was hiding Abu Sabaya in his residence, raided the house of Mayor Dore Kalahal in Barangay Mapatag in Lamitan early yesterday morning, Supt. Bensali Jabarani, the provincial police chief, said.

The elusive Sabaya escaped the dragnet but one alleged Abu Sayyaf member, identified as Mudri Musa, was wounded, a military report said.

Kalahal, who with Basilan Gov. Wahab Akbar went to the 18th B headquarters to protest the raid, said the wounded man was one of his security people.

"If you can find Sabaya in Kalahal's house, I will resign right away," Akbar told 18th B commander Lt. Col. Daniel Lucero.

Safehouse

The military report said that Kalahal's house had been classified as a suspected Abu Sayyaf safehouse.

In another allegedly mistaken military operation, Lantawan Mayor Tahira Ismael claimed Marines had killed three civilians, not Abu Sayyaf bandits, in a reported encounter on April 3 on Dasalan island off Basilan.

Ismael identified the victims as Imam Santa Sala, 60; his wife Salama Ambang, 58; and Isnawi Ingagal, 38. The three were all residents of Dasalan.

"Your men killed innocent civilians, and you

have the nerve to declare they are Abu Sayyaf!" Ismael told Col. Renato Miranda, chief of the 2nd Marine Brigade, during a Crisis Management Committee meeting in Isabela City on Sunday.

On April 4, Lt. Col. Danilo Servando, spokesperson of the Southern Command, announced that the military had killed three members of Abu Sabaya's group during a raid on Dasalan island with the help of crucial intelligence provided by the United States spy planes.

He also claimed that government troops also recovered abandoned firearms in Dasalan.

Search warrant

In the Tuburan incident, Kalahal said he and his family were asleep when 20 soldiers entered his house and demanded "to see me to show me the search warrant."

He said that the raiders started firing when he went down the stairs. He said he was lucky to have escaped.

Kalahal said the soldiers allegedly took with them personal belongings and P5,000 in cash. Jabarani said the soldiers recovered 20 empty shells from an M16 rifle but Kalahal said his men did not fire back.

Lucero defended the raid as a legitimate operation, and claimed that a Judge Danilo Bucoy had issued a search warrant based on information obtained from a military asset that Sabaya was reportedly hiding in Kalahal's house.

But Akbar claimed that Bucoy had denied issuing a search warrant. **Julie S. Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau, with a report from Martin P. Marfil, Metro Manila**

Blast turns wedding into bloody party

COTABATO CITY—Six persons were wounded, three of them seriously, when a homemade bomb exploded during wedding rites uniting two influential Muslim clans here yesterday.

The blast occurred at 10 a.m. in a parking area in the Autonomous Region in Muslim

Mindanao compound here while the wedding of the son of Maguindanao Gov. Andal Ampatuan to the daughter of former mayor Michael Sinsuat of Upi, Maguindanao, was taking place.

"The wedding proceeded as scheduled," said Senior Supt. Sanggacala Dampac, city police chief.

Dampac identified the victims as M/Sgt. Noel Bello, 40; Sgt. Jimmy Gays, 35, and Pfc. Raymond Jopson, 35, all of the 57th Infantry Battalion; Cpl. Pedro Aggong, 31, of Task Force Cotabato and two unidentified civilians.

The soldiers were on guard outside the cultural center for the wedding.

The bomb caused only minor damage. No one claimed responsibility and a police investigation was underway. Maj. Julieto Ando, spokesperson of the 6th Infantry Division, told the Associated Press.

Ampatuan is a known critic of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, a Muslim separatist group currently engaged in peace talks with the government.

MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu denied the group was behind the explosion.

The Hofer Ampatuan-Bal Ingrid Sinsuat wedding was held at the Shariff Kabunsuan Cultural Center with political and military leaders, including Sen. Robert Barbers, in attendance.

Dampac said bomb experts had "sanitized" the compound on the eve of the wedding.

"We don't know how the suspect managed to plant the explosive," he told Radio dxMS.

The bomb was a 60-mm mortar shell fitted with a timing device and trigger mechanism. **Edwin O. Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau, with an AP report**

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He said the extension of retiring general's was one of the main reasons why junior officers turned against former President

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A peso versus poverty

THAT was a heartwarming story the INQUIRER had yesterday: 40 employees of the National Economic Development Authority in Central Luzon are contributing the little that they can so that two poor pupils would have their daily allowance and continue to go to school.

Tens of thousands of children of poor families all over the country cannot go to school not because they can't pay the tuition—schooling in public schools is free—but because they don't have the money for transport and meals. Abigail Dychitan and Alice Dimabuyay of Pampanga are typical of the poor students who are forced to drop out of school because their parents are too poor to give them a daily allowance.

Their plight came to the attention of the school principal, Romeo Matic, who did something to remedy the situation. Matic asked the employees of the Neda in Central Luzon to contribute something so that the two pupils could continue their schooling. The Neda employees immediately responded, donating about P1 a day to raise the P400 monthly allowance for each girl.

The idea caught fire, and now the Central Luzon Association of Regional Officers, which counts with 50 agencies, is carrying out a bigger project called "Baon para kay Bunso." Rene Romero, vice chair of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industries for North Luzon, learned about the fund campaign and immediately donated P20,000. We find it ridiculous, however, that the association members used the P20,000 to make wooden donation boxes instead of distributing it to needy pupils. But we hope other businessmen will contribute to the fund so that more poor students can continue their schooling.

The Neda employees' example shows that one does not have to give much or sacrifice much to be able to help a needy fellowman. The Neda employees only had to give up the pastime of sending jokes through text messaging to be able to save a peso a day for the two girls. That's not too much of a sacrifice, is it? But it means the difference between a girl having money for the daily ride to her school or dropping out. It means the difference between a poor pupil having something to eat while in school or fainting from hunger and getting sick.

The Neda employees' project points up the importance of education as a factor in breaking the vicious cycle of poverty. Think of the nationwide effect if the Neda employees' project could be replicated in other towns and cities. Tens of thousands of students who would otherwise drop out of school would be able to continue their schooling. And all it would take would be a few pesos and a small sacrifice on the part of the donors.

Active lifestyle

IN THE PAMPANGA story, it was a problem of two poor families not having enough money to give their daughters for transport and meals. In the greater part of the country, the growing problem is obesity, partly because of overeating and partly because of lack of exercise.

Some people would think it unbelievable that obesity would be a problem in a poor country like the Philippines where about 33 percent of the people live below the poverty threshold and have barely enough money for two meals a day. But according to officials of the World Health Organization and the Department of Health, obesity is "the biggest epidemic of our time." And the result, they said, is that two million people all over the world die every year of diseases that are linked with a sedentary lifestyle.

Officials of the WHO, the Department of Health and the University of the Philippines cited the following factors that cause obesity: desk-bound jobs, people riding in vehicles instead of walking, lack of parks and sports facilities, the cultural factor: sweating lowers a person's social standing, crowding, poverty, crime, traffic, air pollution and poor diet.

Individuals can correct the situation by leading a more active lifestyle. They can walk or ride a bicycle to negotiate short distances. They can use the stairs instead of the elevator.

Commercial and industrial companies can help make their employees more active and healthier if they provided them with sports and recreation facilities and subsidized activities like taekwondo classes.

The government can help promote a more active lifestyle by building more parks, playgrounds and sports facilities. And it can do something about the air pollution so that more joggers will be encouraged to run in public places again.

The ancient Romans said it well: *Mens sana in corpore sano* (A healthy mind in a healthy body). An active lifestyle makes for a healthy citizenry, and a healthy citizenry can work more effectively to build a progressive and prosperous nation.



Why is there a cement shortage?

PRESIDENT Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and Trade Secretary Mar Roxas II are making a big mistake if it is true that they are knocking under the propaganda of the foreign cement cartel to impose a protective tariff on imported cement. Anybody who is not glib or stupid can see the manipulation clear as a summer day. The cartel is creating a shortage to raise cement prices. It wants to limit importation and raise prices of imports via a tariff barrier so as not to ease the shortage and depress prices.

Roxas himself has confirmed the shortage which resulted in cement prices shooting up to P145 per 40-kg bag in spite of the promise of Philcemcor, the dummy of the foreign cartel, to keep prices between P125 and P135 per bag. Subdivision developers are complaining. They have to wait up to three days to get their deliveries. Delays in construction raise the cost of the dwellings. Low-cost housing projects will cease to be low-cost. They will be high-cost housing projects, thanks to the cement cartel.

Construction always surges in summer to take advantage of the rainless days. There is always a big demand for cement in summer. Everybody knows that. So why did the foreign-owned cement giants mothball 25 of their 37 kilns, leaving only 12 kilns to produce the needed cement? Obviously to create a shortage. When there is a shortage, prices inevitably rise.

But when there is a shortage, we should welcome imports, 'di ba? Especially if they are cheaper. So why does Philcemcor want to put up tariff and non-tariff barriers against imports? Obviously to continue the shortage and raise prices even more. And why are Ms Macapagal and Roxas allowing this? Why are they falling for this manipulation? Are they blind? Don't they see what they're doing? Whatever happened to their commitment to free trade and competition?

What about the consumers? In protecting the cement giants, Ms Macapagal and Roxas are going to put Filipino consumers at the mercy of the cartel. When the supply is con-

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz



trolled and cement prices rise, don't they realize that the government itself will be a victim? Public works projects, which use plenty of cement, will cost more. Mass housing projects for the poor will no longer be affordable to them.

Why don't Philcemcor members operate some of the 25 mothballed kilns (of the total 37 kilns) to increase the supply and relieve the shortage? That will give more jobs to more people. But no, they're threatening to close more cement companies and lay off workers instead.

But that's the modus operandi of the cartel. It dumps its products in poor countries so the local cement companies will lose money. Then it buys out these companies. Once it is in control of the domestic market, it creates an artificial shortage and raises prices. That's what it did and is still doing in the Philippines. The cartel owns 12 of the 17 cement manufacturers operating 20 kilns all over the country. That's what it did in Brazil. Once it controlled the Brazilian cement industry, it raised prices. Cement prices in Brazil, a poor country, are even higher than the prices here. Yet the same cement is being sold very cheap by the cartel to rich countries like the United States.

That is what is going to happen to the Philippines if Ms Macapagal and Roxas don't wake up. Already our cement is being exported very cheap to the United States although consumers there can afford to pay more. The cartel is recovering its losses from Filipino consumers who cannot afford them.

The cartel is also dumping Philippine cement in Indonesia, Korea, Taiwan and Japan. That is why it has to raise prices here to recover

losses there. But it wants the cement companies there to lose money so it can buy them out. It has already made overtures to Indonesian companies to buy them out. Its plan is to dominate the world production and market of cement. It wants to be the Opec of cement, a world cartel that can dictate prices and control supply at will.

Members of the cartel are already the three largest cement conglomerates in the world. Lafarge of France is now the world's biggest conglomerate after its acquisition of rival Blue Circle of the United Kingdom. Cemex of Mexico is the largest international cement trader. Prior to the acquisition by Lafarge of Blue Circle, Holcim of Switzerland was the world leader in cement production. They are already the world's biggest cement conglomerates but their greed knows no bounds. They want more. They want to control the world supply of cement. Today the Philippines, Brazil and other countries; tomorrow the world. And they're going to do it by swallowing up the smaller companies like they did here. Like what they're trying to do in Indonesia, Korea and Taiwan by dumping cheap cement there.

But these smaller companies are fighting back. They're giving the cartel a dose of its own medicine. So the three biggest cement conglomerates in the world have run to the poor, little Philippine government to ask for protection from the little Asian cement companies. It's like the big bullies running home to mama crying for help because some little kids in school are fighting back. Waaah!

And the glibble Mama Gloria and Papa Mar are putty in their hands. They wrap their puny arms around their big, muscle-bound shoulders to comfort the crying bullies.

"There, there, don't cry. Mama and Papa are here. They won't allow those little itty-bitty kids to hurt and scare you."

It's nauseating to hear that from real parents, isn't it? It is even more so when you hear it from the President and a Cabinet member of a supposedly independent nation.

Terrorism

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros



ing the war against terrorism was a war without borders. And further echoing Bush's assertion that an attack on another country was not an act of aggression but an act of defense, he defended his strikes against Palestine as defending the right of Israel to exist. Arafat, he said, was determined to obliterate his nation. What he was doing was preventing it.

He ordered his troops further up the West Bank, into Bethlehem, even threatening to attack at one point the Church of the Nativity, arguing that the Palestinian terrorists were holding the Franciscan friars there hostages. There was only one problem. The Franciscans themselves, particularly their spokesperson in the Holy Land, did not think so. "The friars are not hostages," Fr. David Jaeger said. "They are in their own house, in the precise place where they belong. It is impossible not to fear that the use of this term ('hostages') is meant to legitimize a perhaps imminent military assault (on the church)." Jaeger was not under the barrel of a gun when he said that, he was inside the corridors of the Vatican.

And then the world rose to protest. Until that happened, Bush had been behind Sharon all the way. The scenario seemed perfect, a repeat of a successful formula. Indeed, on the very day Sharon's storm troops descended on Arafat, Bush came out on TV to demand not that Israel withdraw its occupation force but that Arafat use his authority to compel the Palestinian extremist groups to stop committing terrorist acts. As a Palestinian spokesperson told CNN, how could Arafat do that from the bunker he had just been thrown into by the Israelis? Indeed, he said, how could Arafat, who was the voice of sobriety among a

people driven to violence by Israeli repression in the occupied territories and commando raids on heavily populated Palestinian towns was himself being silenced by Sharon? Nothing Arafat said could be listened to at that point. His very plight added fuel to fire.

It was only when the world's capacity to suspend disbelief snapped that Bush began to backtrack and ask Sharon to pull back. Which, as of this writing, Sharon has completely ignored. You cannot let a pet tiger taste blood and rein it in. Either that, or Sharon knows how to read between the lines.

All this has brought back with a vengeance the same questions that were swept aside in the American war on Afghanistan, when the tears over the victims of the World Trade Center drowned out any criticism of that war's logic. Indeed, when Bin Laden provided the perfect villain for a Jerry Bruckheimer-type action movie. Those questions are: What is terrorism? Who are the terrorists? What moral authority do the people who have launched a crusade against terrorism have to lead it?

True enough, as someone told the BBC, when a Palestinian explodes a bomb in a public market, that is terrorism. But what do you call the massacre of hundreds of civilians by Israeli tanks and fighter planes—a surgical excision? True enough, Israel has the right to defend itself against acts of terrorism. But what do you call the rumbling of tanks and the buzzing of warplanes by one of the most powerful armies of the world (an incredible feat for a small nation, made possible by the United States, the world's No. 1 exporter of arms and most ardent supporter of Israel) in the heart of Palestine—an act of self-defense? True enough, the United States has a right to call states that threaten the peace and security of the world "rogues." But what would you call a government that backs the cataclysmic adventurism of a Sharon, and stops only when it backfires in world opinion?

Anti-terrorism?

Comments to dequiros@vasja.com

See the Philippines first

DURING the President's birthday celebration in Malacañang last Friday evening, I asked Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon about what's cooking in his department. One has to really admire Gordon for his never-say-die spirit in promoting tourism in this country. He is gushing over the fact that since his spot ads in CNN and BBC came out promoting the Philippines as a tourist destination, the Department of Tourism website is now getting about 200,000 hits where it used to get only about 400 hits. He stressed that Malaysia, which has been actively advertising also in the international TV networks, spends about US\$180 million a year on such promotions, compared to the DOT's minuscule budget. Imagine if I had even \$10 million to play around with, says Gordon.

He admits that the Philippines has to line up to bag the foreign tourists and that we're far behind. For instance, he notes that European vacationists would prefer exotic islands closer to their continent, such as Seychelles and Maldives; failing that, they head for Thailand's beaches, and perhaps Malaysia's, and only if they don't go there would they end up in the Philippines. Which is really a pity, for as the foreigners themselves readily admit, our tourist spots could rival those of other countries around the region.

Gordon points out that conditions are being corrected with regard to luring the foreign tourists, including putting the Philippines on the map through international promotions, though as the media noted, the Abu Sayyaf crisis is not helping us any. In the meantime, the DOT chief is pushing domestic tourism. He is confident that the new four-day workweek for nearly 1.5 million government employees for April and May would provide the impetus for people to plan vacations, hometown visits and other leisure activities that would help perk up the economy and keep those tourist spots humming.

Gordon has prodded various travel agencies to band together and come up with tour packages for all over the country at rock-bottom prices. You readers must have seen the "Wow Philippines" ads with tour packages as low as P1,050, exhorting us, "Huwag maging dayuhan sa sariling bayan." I suggest that the umbrella group of Philtoa not only

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

repeat those full-page newspaper ads, but also put up posters of these in strategic places. The Philippine Tourism Authority should also get into the action with its own ads, as there are people who want to go on their own, but don't know where to go and what conditions await them.

I asked Gordon what "Wow Philippines" means and the old cheerleader in him said it could mean anything, from "Wenth Of Wonders," to "Warm-Over Winter," "Wacko Over Wildlife," "Wonderfully Original Waterways." For divers it could mean "Wonder Over Wrecks" and for water-skiers it could be "Wild Over Water." Of course, because the beauty of our women precedes us, for gawkers and oglers it could be "Watch Over Women" too, he says with a smile.

He has also extended the "Wow Philippines" campaign to specific destinations, this time wooing well-known local personalities to spearhead it. For instance, the "Wow Cebu" campaign will feature Cebuana actress Vina Morales on the posters, while "Wow Batangas" will have no other than Lipa Mayor Vilma Santos; Sharon Cuneta will smile from the Palawan posters, while Richard and Lucy Gomez will lure them to Ormoc and Leyte. Davao's No. 1 promoter is former beauty queen Margie Moran-Moironde.

Gordon would be on the right path if he ties up the local governments to his promotion campaign, and here he should coordinate with Interior Secretary Joey Lina. The local government executives ought to be convinced that tourism is the fastest way to bring in the big bucks and generate economic activity and employment. There

should also be a lot of pride involved in promoting one's town or city. But the local executives should also be convinced that before the tourists descend on their areas they have to work hard to make them really tourist-friendly. Perhaps there could be regular awards from the DOT for the most tourist-friendly towns and cities, especially those that assure the safety of the tourists and provide clean public toilets.

Years ago, when my husband was still brigade commander in Laguna, I recall that Senators Nene Pimentel and Santanina Rasul held a conference in Pagsanjan with civil and military authorities on how to prevent some local boat operators from cheating and tormenting the tourists who go shooting the rapids in Pagsanjan. It was truly deplorable to see how these hoodlum cheats were laying to waste a very good tourist asset.

It seems that Pagudpud in Ilocos Norte is the tourist flavor of the season, as I keep hearing about it from everyone, including our long-time family friend, business executive Francis de Leon. They say it's like a more pristine Boracay. Over the many years my family and I have been touring the length and breadth of this country, including 25 days roaming all over Mindanao by land when my husband was southern chief in 1993-1994. I know from first-hand knowledge that we truly have a beautiful country, but I'm ashamed to admit I don't know the Ilocos region beyond Vigan. I do plan to visit Pagudpud this summer.

Of course there are all-time favorite destinations like Banaue, Sagada and Bontoc—if you haven't seen them yet, it's time. Catch the sunset, or the sunrise over the magnificent Banaue rice terraces. On the other hand, companies looking for a place to hold a conference or a whole-day outing should try Corregidor, where they have a three-star hotel run by the PTA as well as inns and a reasonably good beach, plus all the well-preserved war memorials. The firm headed by my husband held a two-day strategy conference in Corregidor and it was good because everyone was locked in and thus focused.

A story of clergy sexual abuse

HE was 16 and a freshman in a Cebu university. He was beset by numerous problems—failing grades, the lack of financial support and a personal crisis to boot. Overcome by these difficulties, he attempted suicide, and when the school officials found out, they sent over a priest who also happened to be a psychologist to offer counseling.

"He came, telling me a lot of things most of which I couldn't understand because my head was spinning at the time," "N" writes. "He then said he wanted to see me in the chapel the next day at 2 p.m. I went to the chapel, where he was serving as the chaplain and he was there waiting. On seeing me, he said he had to prepare for Mass and needed to go up to his room in the fourth floor to change his clothes. He wanted me to accompany him there."

"So I went. He told me to sit on his bed and he started counseling me. He was making a lot of sense until I noticed that his hands were starting to roam, until they reached my private parts. I became confused and troubled and I couldn't understand what had happened. I went home in a daze, my mind blank. I felt like a dark cloud had fallen over me. But that was not the end of it."

At the end of the semester, "N" decided to tell another priest about what happened. But nothing came of it mainly because, "N" thinks, they needed to protect the school first. The priests did ask for his forgiveness, but "N" says he has chosen to forget much of what happened.

"All I wanted to tell you," continues "N," "is that to this day I still carry within me the pain of that experience. I feel violated and abused until now. I have also lost all faith and trust in the Church and in priests. I am now in my 30s but I still have nightmares about that incident. I feel like I'm burning in Hell."

"I hope you can write something that will give young men, especially students, the courage and inner strength to speak out against their abuse and fight for their rights."

Dear "N," I don't think I need to say much more beyond what you wrote, since your honesty and

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

bravery already convey so much to young men battling the demons of sexual abuse. I think you've already proven the consequences of burying the experience of abuse under a blanket of denial and face-saving. What Filipino society, and the local Roman Catholic Church, need to do about the emerging scandals of pedophiles and sexual opportunists among the clergy is not to hush it up but to talk about it in the open, confront the reality, punish the guilty and protect and heal the innocent. Thank you, "N," for trusting me and our readers with your story.

ANOTHER reaction to the column on "pedophile priests" in the country comes from a foreign missionary who is due to retire soon after serving the country for 30 years.

"As a Roman Catholic Missionary Priest (I may just as well say: as a human being) I feel sad, humiliated and at times very angry at all reports of abuse, especially sexual abuse of children. It hurts even more if those crimes are committed by fellow priests. Those crimes should be stopped by every possible means, even if that means public exposure," writes "Fr. H."

But he warns that "(a) public exposé of the sinner by itself does not seem a virtue. As such it is understandable that one does not wash dirty linen in public. It is understandable that bishops try to cover up for priests, as you would cover up for your husband or daughter, I dare to guess. However, covering up and allowing the crime to continue is despicable."

"Fr. H," however, wants to also bring to light what he calls "shocking" observations

about Filipino sexual mores.

"I noticed that Filipinos and Filipinas could never be alone, not even in the most private places like bathrooms and restrooms. Hardly anybody seemed to be 'sleeping' alone. Older men, including priests, often had a younger man or boy sleeping with them. Men were greeting each other by grabbing each other in the groin. Mothers would pinch their daughters playfully or in punishment between the legs."

"I have seen women in a circle, while telling the latest news, passing on a baby boy, each one sucking the penis of the little boy until the boy had an erection. All this was done in front of me, a priest, without a sense of shame. I could continue (with similar) stories. My question is: What is sexual abuse in the Philippines? In my native country one would frown (to put it mildly) on most of these happenings. I am sure that many (people) could be found guilty of sexual abuse and pedophilia, if judged by the standards used on some of the abusive priests in the USA."

WELL, "Fr. H," I have to say that, I too have noticed the peculiar physical "liberties" we Pinoy take with each other. I remember feeling only mildly amused when I read a "guide" for foreigners living in the Philippines about the tendency of Pinoy males to walk around holding hands. "This is just a sign of friendship and should not be mistaken as a sign of homosexuality," the writer helpfully offered. Your account of the penis-sucking circle of women comes as a bit of a shocker, though.

Still, there is definitely something wrong when a person enjoying moral authority and even a "holy" stature among people would abuse his position of trust for sexual gratification. It is not "washing dirty linen in public" to investigate charges of sexual abuse and take steps to protect other children from further abuse. It is standing by the truth and living by the word of God that "the truth shall set you free."

Adopt a lighthouse

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper

lighthouses under the aegis of that agency into paying inns. Although the government may not have thought much of the idea, having other priorities as usual, the concept appears to have a lasting appeal to others. Part of that day's conference at the Department of Foreign Affairs was the presentation of a group of De La Salle students of their thesis promoting the adoption of a lighthouse as a means of preserving these heritage landmarks. Congratulations are in order for Caroline Dy, Cristina Bessa, Kimberly Ng and Mira Blanca Abinoja for seconding Commodore Fajardo.

Given the state of our architectural heritage and the official lack of interest, even without being told, you can already conclude that the lighthouses (there are 480 of them) are in very bad condition. Nor can the Coast Guard (the girls use the word "rehabilitate") restore and maintain them. Required operational efficiency standards of 99 percent are required by the International Association of Lighthouse Authorities. Ours operate at 86 percent. You think by any chance the Senate or House committee on maritime safety, if there were such an animal, would be interested? I wouldn't advise holding our breath while we wait though. This is probably why the Coast Guard has also decided to "entail the help of the community and private sector for funding" rather than waiting for assistance from the national government which is interested in other things.

The first part of the project deals with aware-

ness and the proponents propose advocacy campaigns aimed at the sector that stands to benefit the most as well as secondary beneficiaries. The second part "aims to encourage business and maritime-related communities to adopt at least 85 lighthouses." Of these, 22 are considered historical and date back to the Spanish era.

The Coast Guard has come up with a leasing policy wherein private individuals, companies and organizations could "adopt" a lighthouse (and more than one, too) for a certain length of time. The lessee will of course be expected to restore and maintain the structures and "to ensure their operational efficiency by providing the necessary lights." In the process he may, if he so wishes, "set up businesses and other investments to generate continuous funds" from the adaptive re-use.

The proponents suggest restaurants or tourist spots and "real estate developers can also develop these lighthouses as part of beaches and resorts." The structures are located after all in frequently navigated sea lanes so that it would not entail taking a detour for ships of Negros Navigation or Abotiz Lines to drop off tourists, for instance.

There are other reasons big shipping companies should be involved in such a program even if they were not to profit directly. There's security for vessels that carry raw materials and finished goods in and out of the country. "More than 50 percent of the raw materials of local and multinational companies are imported and...are heavily dependent on maritime transportation."

Then there's the corporate image they may wish to project. Civic responsibility and consciousness aren't all that important yet but it is the 21st century—so what are we waiting for?

It is expected that there would also be fewer maritime accidents that in turn would cost the shipping companies much less in replacement costs and probably lawyers' fees.

His story

MY plans for Nov. 30, National Heroes' Day, last year were very predictable: go home (to Bulacan), stuff myself with every food in sight, take a nap and sleep some more. But unknown to me, my mother had other activities in mind.

We made it to the Cultural Center of the Philippines before my brothers could even say, "Are we there yet?" My Dad parked the car at Luneta and my brothers and I waited at the Sun Cruises Inc. office. Peering through the glass windows, I saw that it was packed with Filipinos and foreigners alike. I wondered if we could still get a ticket because our trip was a spur-of-the-moment kind of thing. In other words, we did not have reservations.

Eventually, my mother came out holding two tickets for each of us, one for the cruise ride and another for a "lights and sounds" show in the Malinta Tunnel. A lights and sounds show in the Malinta Tunnel? I said to myself. What are they planning to do? Wake all those spirits in there? The boat ride from Manila to Corregidor took us an hour. Because we did not have reservations, my family and I were assigned to different seats. I was seated beside an old man, and his wife.

We arrived at Lorch Dock, the same dock where Gen. Douglas MacArthur promised that he "shall return." Our first stop on the island was the Heroes' Memorial. People took each other's picture here and there—typical tourist stuff. Next stop was the Malinta Tunnel, and I could not help but feel apprehensive. The tunnel was so massive that a train could fit inside. We entered and the gates were slowly closed. But before my eyes were covered by darkness, I saw the familiar figure of the old man who was seated next to me on the boat. The look on his face and his eyes made me stare at him and observe him all throughout the trip.

Darkness enveloped us. We were standing in front of the entrance to the first sub-tunnels. An orange spotlight glowed on top of a metal statue. Then a voice started to speak in a clipped tone. The man talking was Gen. Jonathan Wainwright.

The orange glow disappeared and another spotlight, brighter than the first one, beamed at a figure sitting on a chair. The voice of Manuel L. Quezon spoke, coughing every now and then. I peered behind my back and watched as the old man smiled, as if he knew something we didn't know.

The statue of Wainwright was an exact replica of him. His voice was perfect. The way he pronounced "Quezon" as "K-zown" showed great efforts were made to copy Wainwright's intonation. But something about President Quezon's voice did not seem right.

Walking toward the next tunnel entrance, I stepped beside the old man. He was chuckling, and I looked at him. "That's not the way he sounded—President Quezon," he whispered to me. "They got his voice all wrong. And the cough, it was so recorded, and sounded so fake."

We proceeded to the next tunnel entrance, set up as a hospital. Old medicine bottles and medical bags were lying on the dirt floor. The sounds came. They were made by people screaming, "Nurse, help!" "Tulong! Tulong!" Others pleaded: "Please, my friend is dying. Treat him first!" The nurses were yelling above the din, "One at a time, we don't have enough equipment. Please!"

Standing beside the old man, I asked, "Is this what it was like?"

"Yes, yes, this they got it perfect. This is exactly it..." He was interrupted by a loud boom, and at that moment, the whole tunnel shook. My heart jumped out of my rib cage. The bulbs inside the makeshift hospital flashed and so did the rows of lights in the main tunnel. More screams came, sounding so real.

The old man grabbed my arm. "Hapon!" he whispered. But the whole thing was just a stage effect; a damn good one, for it scared the hell out of all of us.

The whole show lasted half an hour. Two video clips were shown on slide walls in different parts of the tunnel, narrations and actual recordings of the war.

The last tunnel shown to us featured soldiers playing cards, a lone sergeant playing a jazz tune and a nurse and a soldier dancing in the back room. The inanimate figures were highlighted one by one, their voices giving life to them and telling their story. And they had one story to tell: Bataan had fallen, tomorrow they might never see each other again. This was their last night and they wanted to pass it happily.

The show was over and I was almost ready to leave when right in the middle of the dimly lit tunnel, our flag was raised. We sang the national anthem, this time prouder than we had ever sung it before.

I glanced at the old man beside me. He was in tears. "It is a good show," I said, starting the conversation. "The lights used for the characters were orange, giving them a brownish yet golden glow, like old movies and photographs."

He was just quiet. "The sounds seemed real, the voices, the people shouting. And the thunderous sound caused by the bombs reverberated through me. They shook me every time they were played," I continued. "And the props, they were authentic, I knew when I saw those medicine bottles..."

He gave me a look and I closed my mouth. "That is all it is to you—a show?" he demanded in a whisper.

"No!" I answered quickly. "It's history. It's real."

"How can it be real to you?" he asked. "You feel the vibration of the tunnel but that is all it is. You know it's just a show. You know there is no danger. It's a good show, yes, but nothing can compare to the real thing. No show or movie can capture the real horror of war."

I was quiet. I looked at everyone. Hundreds of people died here, and look at us, taking pictures, laughing and enjoying ourselves.

"History to you," he whispered. "My story to me." He shuffled slowly toward our bus. "I was here, you know," he said, looking back at me. "I know."

Michelle Rose Solano, 18, is an incoming junior at the Ateneo de Manila University majoring in English Literature.

THEY SAID

Fair trial

"On a pile of Bibles we assure you that this court was not created to convict you."
—Sandiganbayan Associate Justice Minita Musario to deposed President Joseph Estrada

No time for talking

"We've been offering peace but the communists ignore it. So we have to show the armed rebels that we are running out of time. What the Filipinos need now is food on the table and not debate."

—Maj. Gen. Ernesto Carolina, head of the military's Southern Luzon Command

Computers needed for gov't reforms

WHEN personal computers became familiar office equipment, you would have thought everyone would have welcomed them. Specially employees in government offices who seemed always swamped with paperwork.

Ab, but there is something about some government offices that seems to defy the revolution in information technology. Particularly those where corruption thrives well.

Computers are the dumbest creation of man. What you see is what you get. They do not connive. They do not lie. They cannot recognize political patrons and have absolutely no loyalty to speak of. They are the last piece of equipment any Mafia in the public service wants in their offices.

No wonder there are offices of the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) where the computers are kept in packing crates, hidden behind stacks of ITR returns of decades long gone, their very existence denied by mortal beings.

Because they spell bad news. The Bureau of Customs (BOC) has begun to computerize its operations and it is now well into completing them. Bad news for the vermin who wheel and deal inside the BOC.

Procurement in national government agencies will soon be coursed through the cyberinfrastructure where the protective walls of transparency can drive out the evil orcs of procurement rigging who reign with impunity.

But in the BIR, the fellowship of change has made very little progress. Very little because the stakes are huge and the soldiers of fortune are more defiant. A few years ago, the BIR embarked on a computerization program to the tune of about \$40 million. Today, very little of that system makes sense. And yet the spoils of the battle are strewn all over the posh villages of Metro Manila and suburbs with garages

housing luxury cars.

In the BIR, there is a separate unit tasked with handling information technology. It is an oxymoron at the very least in an agency where the rule of thumb is to steal with your mouth shut, hands in your pocket and make sure everybody is happy. How can the computer even survive? It is currently listed as an endangered species of the modern world when reforms and reengineering are turning over vestiges of corruption and bureaucratic red tape.

Reforming the BIR calls for the computer and information technology to reign over the empires of petty thieves and corruption lords. Those tasked with introducing computerization should realize that their job is to support the operations of the bureau and not to establish a separate agency catering to itself. On the other hand, BIR people in operations should treat the "techies" as allies in a common fight to plug the leakage



in tax administration.

Computerization in the BIR, Customs and government procurement are essential steps in governance reforms. That they will be resisted like virulent viruses attacking existing structures of corruption is a given. After all, as in the movie "Sneakers," while scrambling letters in search for clues to their quest, Robert Redford, droopy eyes in place, arranged them to spell, t-o-o-m-a-t-o-y-s-e-c-r-e-t-s.

Computers spill too many secrets out.

—JEWELWAYNE S. CAIN, volunteer, Walang Ku-Corrupt social marketing campaign, Mabuhay Street, Diliman, Quezon City

Cut (Part 2)

LAST Thursday, I began writing about a bill filed by Sen. Loi Estrada which would punish rapists with castration. The bill sparked quite a few discussions before Holy Week, with tabloids and radio commentators and not a few housewives gleeefully entertaining the possibilities of *puto-ari*.

I don't know if the bill actually proposes a penile guillotine, which would put us in the international limelight again, together with our dog eaters and Abu Sayyaf bandits. While probably effective, that kind of castration is considered to be outright mutilation and would violate international norms about "unusually cruel punishment."

PINOY KASI

Michael Tan



Probably the kind of castration in the mind of our physician-senator is what vets would call neutering or capon, and what medical people delicately refer to as orchidectomy. This procedure is quite safe and simple, not even requiring hospitalization. A slit is made in the scrotum to remove the testes, the site of testosterone production, testosterone being the "male" hormone (females actually have them too) blamed for sexual aggression. Besides this surgical procedure, there is also "chemical castration," where the female hormone progesterone is administered every three months, and which then suppresses testosterone production.

Do these procedures work? It does with dogs and cats and pigs but humans, being humans, are a bit more complex. To explain this, we can look at the Italian *castrato* (plural form, *castrati*) for a case study. From the 16th to early 20th century, there were Catholic boys who were castrated before puberty to produce singers who could keep the "angelic" voice of a young boy, combined with the vocal power of an adult male.

These *castrati* were actually much like pop stars today, idolized for their voices, somewhat like Michael Jackson (who is not, let me repeat, not a *castrato*). Women fainted during their performances, wore medallions with their favorite *castrato* and chased after these pop idols. And the *castrati* were able to reciprocate, even with sex. Readers who saw the film "Farinelli," about a 17th century *castrato*, will remember what a gigolo he was, and may have wondered how a *castrato* could have so many escapades.

My point is that even after an orchidectomy, a man can still have sex. We're talking here about a volatile mixture of human lust, libido and desire that transcend hormones. I should mention that orchidectomy is in fact one of the treatments offered for prostate cancer. Because this form of cancer is driven by testosterone, an orchidectomy may help to slow its spread.

The medical books point out that there are side effects such as a reduced libido, erectile dysfunction, weight gain, fatigue, anemia, osteoporosis. The same side effects are found with chemical castration but in both instances, sex is still possible. The Americans, who think of everything, even have testicular prostheses or artificial "balls" for those concerned about aesthetics. (An equivalent, neuticles, is available for "fixed" pets.)

The fact that castration has been proposed for rapists tells us that people do recognize rape as being much more than a criminal act. In effect, Loi Estrada plays her role as a physician in prescribing castration to treat a mental disorder.

I tend to subscribe to this view, which is another reason why I think the death penalty is as atrocious as rape itself—we are really punishing "sick" individuals. Chemical castration is in fact offered in California not as a penalty but as form of rehabilitation to pedophiles.

Having said all that, I will emphasize that rape should not be kept at the level of a medical disorder. Rape involves power relations, and is most common in societies that glorify male domination and power.

Interview the rapists and many will actually say they had the right to rape their victim, because she was "asking for it." Rape often results, too, from a combination of other skewed power relations, for example, the employer over an employee, the teacher over a student, an older man over a young girl, even the father over a daughter, and the husband over his wife.

A lot of the talk around Loi Estrada's bill emphasizes how castration, like the death penalty, might deter potential rapists. I doubt it. All our executions since 1995 have involved rapists, and rape continues unabated. The evidence from countries all over the world shows that death penalty and heinous punishments don't work to reduce crime, especially when the rich and powerful (precisely the ones more prone to rape) are able to get away without any kind of punishment.

Rape prevention comes about as we change our sexual values, helping people to understand that without consent, sex is rape. That may seem so basic a fact, yet remember the debates a few years ago to amend our laws on rape when a number of our congressmen vehemently opposed the proposal to allow spouses to charge their partners with rape? Many Filipinos, women included, still believe a man has absolute sexual rights over his wife or girlfriend.

Changing our values is a long-term proposition and even if we do change our culture, rape will not be completely eradicated. Power is so intoxicating and constantly spills over into the area of sexuality. The articles about Catholic pedophile priests in the United States have generally avoided the term but let's call a spade a spade: these priests abused their power over young parishioners, some with sexual molestation and others with outright rape. If they had been in the Philippines (and I am sure they exist here), they'd be liable for the lethal injection or, if Senator Loi has her way, castration.

Lock up the rapists, but explore ways of rehabilitation. Some will reform, others won't. Castration? All it does is to penalize the penis, and to divert our attention from the real issues surrounding power and sexuality.

Comments to miguel@pinoykasi.net

Misquoted on abolition of offices

THIS refers to the story "GMA scraps heritage bodies" last March 8, 2002.

Please be informed that I was not correctly quoted by your correspondents in Dagupan City. First, I never said that the commission was abolished out of political expediency. What I said was that the LGCCM, like all other commissions, was abolished after a recommendation from a committee tasked to review the functions of all these bodies found legitimate and valid reasons to abolish and transfer their functions to concerned departments and LGUs.

Second, I did not say that the executive order was signed on March 1 during the meeting held in Malacanan. I said this was signed on Feb. 11, 2002 and was presented to concerned agencies during that meeting. Such allusion is contrary to the statement in paragraph three of the story.

As background, kindly be informed that these commissions were created for specific mandates and at this point, most of them must have outlived their mandates, hence it is necessary to phase them out in consonance with the government's rationalization and streamlining of the offices directly under the Office of the President.

—MANUEL D. GERACHI, Undersecretary, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Visayas Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City

THE QUOTES we used to support the story premise are borne out by an official LGCCM transcript. The transcript also refers to a March 1 meeting called by the President where she signed the executive order. Gerachi was heavily quoted in the story, and the transcript backs the references.

—YOLANDA FUERTES and VINCENT CABREZA, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Enough of drawn-out mourning

ENOUGH of Rico Yan already. The media, especially certain TV stations, have gone overboard with the constant, week-long tribute to Yan, from the time airing starts to the time airing ends.

Don't get me wrong. I think he was a fine young man, a good example of someone who did not take his fame lightly. But the constant bombardment of everything and anything about him has started to be unnerving.

For crying out loud, let his family and friends grieve for him privately. I'm sure if he were alive, he would not have wanted to turn everything into a circus.

It's such a shame and such a sad reflection of the character of this country. Two national artists for the arts die and there is but a few minutes of tribute to them in the news. Overseas Filipino workers die in Dubai and there is but the obligatory reporting.

It just goes to show that the movie and TV celebrity is still king. No wonder we elected an action star to the presidency. Look at what this has brought us.

If this letter does see print, I'm hopeful the whole Rico Yan tribute will be mercifully over and then he can finally rest in peace.

—ISABELLA ROA, mysteryare@yahoo.com

Incredible loss of documents

IT is unconscionable that there is no one responsible for the safekeeping of the Presidential Commission on Good Government documents, especially those relating to the Marcoses and cronies.

Haydee Yorac, the PCGG chair, when asked who is responsible, retorted, "Who knows?" This kind of an answer can turn even the most glib into a skeptic.

It seems incredible that these documents are not under proper control and tight security.

Is the whole enterprise (Marcos ill-gotten wealth investigation) a sham?

—C. PAULIN, omega@one.com

Grand design to brand MILF as terrorist

THE EDITORIAL "The wrong war?" last March 8, 2002 sensationalized a handful of unfounded, baseless and malicious imputations, which are apparently part of a grand design to "delegitimize" the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) in order to include it in the list of a group of "terrorist" organizations.

It is obvious the *Inquirer*, which has been looked upon as an epitome of media professionalism in the Philippines, might have been elicited by a massive psychological war campaign against so-called international terrorism.

This time the campaign shifts to the MILF. It labels the MILF as the "real terrorist threat" with links to the international terrorist network of Osama bin Laden, which coincides with the ongoing RP-US Balikatan 02-1 war exercises in the country.

The sources, which were mainly obtained and lifted from foreign media reports and outlets, were clearly the product of speculation without an iota of verification of the actual situation on the ground.

I say that one of the major sources of turmoil and conflicts in the world today is the "double



'Corruption of the best is worst'

"CORRUPTIO optimi pessima (Corruption of the best is the worst)" is one of the many Latin aphorisms I learned as a teenager. It was an example, in connection with our Latin composition class, of juxtaposing two words with opposite meanings. I did not realize then it would one day describe our country. For when did we ever see in our country a famous father who was an ex-president and also a famous son who was an ex-town mayor sharing adjoining cell rooms, both accused of crimes punishable by death?

While I seethe with anger every time I recall one of the earliest cruel acts of Erap as president (the injustice inflicted by him directly against my wife when in July 1998 he fired her from government employment after almost three decades of faithful and exemplary service), I fully agree with Erap saying he cannot get fair treatment from the judiciary.

Erap need not look far for proof of unfair treatment. All he has to do is just to look at his son.

I, like Erap, also have a son in prison. Because my son is handsome (salesladies could not help but lovingly gaze at him whenever he went to buy clothes at the malls), kind and gentle in his ways, he is in constant danger of being harmed or, worse, raped by the prison bullies.

The injustice being committed

by our judiciary against my son, along with the thousands of prisoners all over the country, is that they suffer sub-human slum surroundings while Jinggoy enjoys air-conditioned accommodations with physicians always available on short notice to serve his needs. On a per capita basis, the state spends more, much, much more, for Jinggoy than for my son and all the other prisoners.

My son has asthma. Every attack of asthma is life threatening. That is why my wife worries day and night about his health, safety and life.

The *optimi* in the Latin adage does not refer to Erap. He barely qualifies because like the stupid robbers and thieves caught with their loot, he was easily caught holding stolen riches. "*Optimi*" refers rather to the much-publicized do-gooder elite leaders like the heads of "civil society" groups who claim credit for ousting Erap and installing Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo in Malacañang, like Jaime Cardinal Sin, running priest Father Robert Reyes and bishops of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines and those who present themselves to the public as morally blameless. Truly these are "*optimi*," the best of the best.

But what is disturbing is their silence, especially the ecclesiastics' acceptance of the unequal treatment of prisoners. While Jinggoy enjoys accommodations only the super-rich can afford, and at state expenses, my son and Hubert Webb and all the other prisoners are incarcerated in sub-human slum conditions.

Are Cardinal Sin, running Father Reyes and the CBCP bishops silent because they also live in air-conditioned rooms, live the lifestyle of the rich and powerful, the privileged class of Erap and Jinggoy? Is that why they no longer see injustice in the state's treatment of Jinggoy vis-à-vis its treatment of my son and the others? Have their lifestyle and identification with the rich and powerful class lulled them, dulled their sense of justice, corrupted them? Is this the *corruptio optimi*? Yes, yes, and it makes me very sad and very angry!

For as long as the state treats Jinggoy like a prince and the ecclesiastics are silent about this singular and celebrated display of injustice, Erap should not expect fair treatment from the judiciary.

I take this opportunity to thank those who texted me their concern for my son who perfectly understood when I texted back, "Are we not all children of God?"

—NING SANTOS, 46 Simoun St., Quezon City

with the firm expectation that this dispensation, unlike the regime of deposed President Joseph Estrada, really meant business at the negotiation table.

Which is true? The policy declaration of the Macapagal administration that the US troops are here for the military exercises only, or the claim of the Filipino nationalists that the US troops are here as plain and simple "military intervention" which is against the Philippine Constitution, sovereignty and territorial integrity?

Be that as it may, the MILF has nothing to worry about the Balikatan exercises as long as the GRP-MILF peace agreements are respected. The ceasefire agreement is enough to address any problem related to these exercises because the GRP-MILF agreement on the cessation of hostilities, as far as the MILF is concerned, is still holding.

—JUN MANTAWIL, secretary head, MILF Peace Panel, GRP-MILF Peace Talks

We suggest that the letter writer read the editorial one more time. He might discover yet what we said.—Ed.

In the pursuit of its avowed political objective, the MILF has always adhered to the policy of peaceful means to resolve the three-decades-old armed conflicts and the age-old Bangsamoro problem in Mindanao. Hence, it has agreed to the resumption of the MILF-GRP peace talks as offered by the Macapagal administration

ternationally recognized human rights instruments? I have reason to believe that linking the MILF with the Abu Sayyaf and the al-Qaida is part of a sinister move in the pursuit of the final objective of the hawkish bloc in the Macapagal administration headed by Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes, at the expense of the civilian leadership of this country.

The MILF is a legitimate national liberation organization fighting for a just cause. It is the continuation of the struggle of the Moro people to regain their usurped freedom and independence. In fact, the struggle of the Bangsamoro for freedom and rights to self-determination has existed long before the coming of the Americans in the Philippines.

Does this mean the United States has ceased to respect the laws of civilized nations and the rights to freedom and self-determination of the oppressed minorities of the world as embodied in the Charter of the United Nations, the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Humanitarian Law and other in-

The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

UK: Israel plays dangerous game

LONDON—Britain warned Israel on Monday it was playing an "extremely dangerous game" by defying a US request to withdraw forces from Palestinian territory and strongly criticized the actions of Israeli troops.

Foreign Office junior minister Ben Bradshaw said it was "totally unacceptable" that Israeli forces had shot at Bethlehem's Church of the Nativity, one of Christianity's holiest sites.

"It's the latest in a long line of completely unacceptable actions by the Israeli defense force," Bradshaw told BBC radio.

"I think the Israelis are playing an extremely dangerous game. They are continuing to defy the United States," he added.

Bradshaw said President George W. Bush and his senior officials had made it absolutely clear that the international community demanded Israel's immediate withdrawal from the occupied territories.

"That means today," he said.

Spanish Foreign Minister Josep Pique, whose country holds the rotating presidency of the European Union, said on Sunday the EU would discuss introducing possible sanctions against Israel if it went on rejecting calls for a ceasefire in the Palestinian territories.

US Secretary of State Colin Powell left the United States on Sunday on a peace-seeking mission which will take him to Israel later this week.

On Monday, Israeli troops fired shots at the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem and battled Palestinian gunmen in the West Bank towns of Jenin and Nablus, defying US demands that they end their offensive. **Reuters**



A GROUP of Indonesian Muslim high school students chants anti-Israel slogans during a protest outside the US Embassy in Jakarta April 8. Indonesian Muslim groups rallied in the streets of Jakarta protesting the Israeli military's continued strikes against Palestinians. **REUTERS**

Defense spending across Asia seen rising after 9/11

SERI KEMBANGAN, Malaysia—Defense spending across the Asia-Pacific region is expected to rise as countries recovering from wounded economies grapple with new national security concerns, an international defense show was told Monday.

Most Asian countries were forced to slash their defense budgets during the 1997-1998 regional financial crisis, but the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks in the United States had "drastically changed the outlook toward national security," Malaysia's Defense Minister Najib Razak said in a speech to the Defense Services Asia exhibition, one of the world's largest.

"With the economy of most of these countries back on track there will be a projected increase in the defense expenditure to procure platforms, weapons systems and solutions to meet national requirements," Najib said.

Najib said the Malaysian government had embarked on "major defense procurement programs" and was scheduled to sign several contracts this week to buy new military equipment.

Najib did not elaborate but defense ministry officials said the purchases would include short-range air defense missiles, anti-aircraft weaponry and infantry light arms.

The three-day exhibition brings together more than 200 security officials from 36 countries and 500 companies exhibiting their latest defense technology.

Christopher Poss, an editor for Jane's Defense Weekly magazine, said that since the terrorist attacks some governments were showing more interest in radar and sensory equipment to protect their borders, airports and other vital assets. **AP**

Trial of Indonesia speaker to continue

JAKARTA—An Indonesian court on Monday said the politically sensitive graft trial of the country's parliament speaker can go ahead, dismissing objections from his defense team that the indictment was flawed.

The case puts a spotlight on President Megawati Sukarnoputri's efforts to fight corruption while trying to hold together a governing coalition in which speaker Akbar Tandjung's Golkar party is her key partner.

Lawyers for Tandjung, defendant in a \$4-million scandal in-

volving the state food agency, have slammed the prosecutors for putting him and two other defendants in the dock in a single trial. His lawyers said that made the charges specifically against him unclear.

But judges said there was nothing wrong with that.

"The indictments have fulfilled the legal requirements to become the base for examining the defendant in this case. We hereby declare the trial of this case should continue," said chief judge Amiruddin Zakaria. **Reuters**

Koizumi ally quits over scandal

TOKYO—A scandal-tainted lawmaker who was once a close ally of Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and a former leader of the Liberal Democratic Party resigned Monday from parliament over alleged misuse of political donations.

Koichi Kato, who had already quit Koizumi's party last month because of alleged tax evasion by an aide, was called before parliament Monday to testify about that case and additional allegations he misused campaign funds.

During the testimony, Kato said he would leave politics, and hours later submitted his resignation to a parliamentary committee.

"I intend to resign as a member of parliament to take the entire social, political and ethical responsibility over the case," he said. But he added that he does not believe he is guilty of any legal wrongdoing.

"This is not to take legal responsibility," he said. Kato, 62, has been under pressure to quit politics amid reports that he allegedly received about \$676,000 of political donations in his per-

sonal bank account.

Japanese media have reported that Kato's aide transferred the money into the politician's bank account from a fund that managed political contributions. The transfers reportedly began in 1997.

Kato allegedly used the money for personal expenditures, including the rent of a high-priced apartment in central Tokyo for several years.

Kato has acknowledged spending about \$7,500 of the donations in rent for his apartment, which doubled as an office.

Under Japanese

law, most payments to politicians over \$376 from such funds must be reported. In Kato's case, none were reported from 1998 to 2000, media have reported. **AP**

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WATER TROUBLE

Bangladesh children await the arrival of a tanker carrying water in Dhaka on April 8 as the city reels under a severe water crisis. The Bangladesh Army began supplying water with their mobile water tanks at the request of the government last week. **REUTERS**

Ban on diesel buses in Delhi spawns chaos

NEW DELHI—Transport chaos hit the Indian capital on Monday following a Supreme Court ruling ordering half the city's public bus fleet off the road for failing to switch to cleaner fuel.

Schools were shut and long queues snaked from bus stops in the city of 13 million after the court rejected a last-ditch plea by transit operators for more time to allow them to change their fume-belching diesel buses to compressed natural gas (CNG) fuel.

The court has been spearheading a drive to end choking pollution in New Delhi, rated one of the world's dirtiest cities where doctors report a mounting toll of people with breathing ailments.

In 1998 it ordered that all buses switch to CNG and set a three-year deadline.

More than 6,000 buses, half the number that normally ply the streets, were taken off the road. Those still running were stuck in traffic jams.

"The bus came after an hour and then there was no place so we had to walk for an hour," said one exasperated commuter.

Police were braced for violence following threats by some private operators to disrupt partial services. "Various reactions can be expected ranging from road hold-ups, mob violence and rioting," deputy police commissioner S.B.S. Tyagi said. **Reuters**

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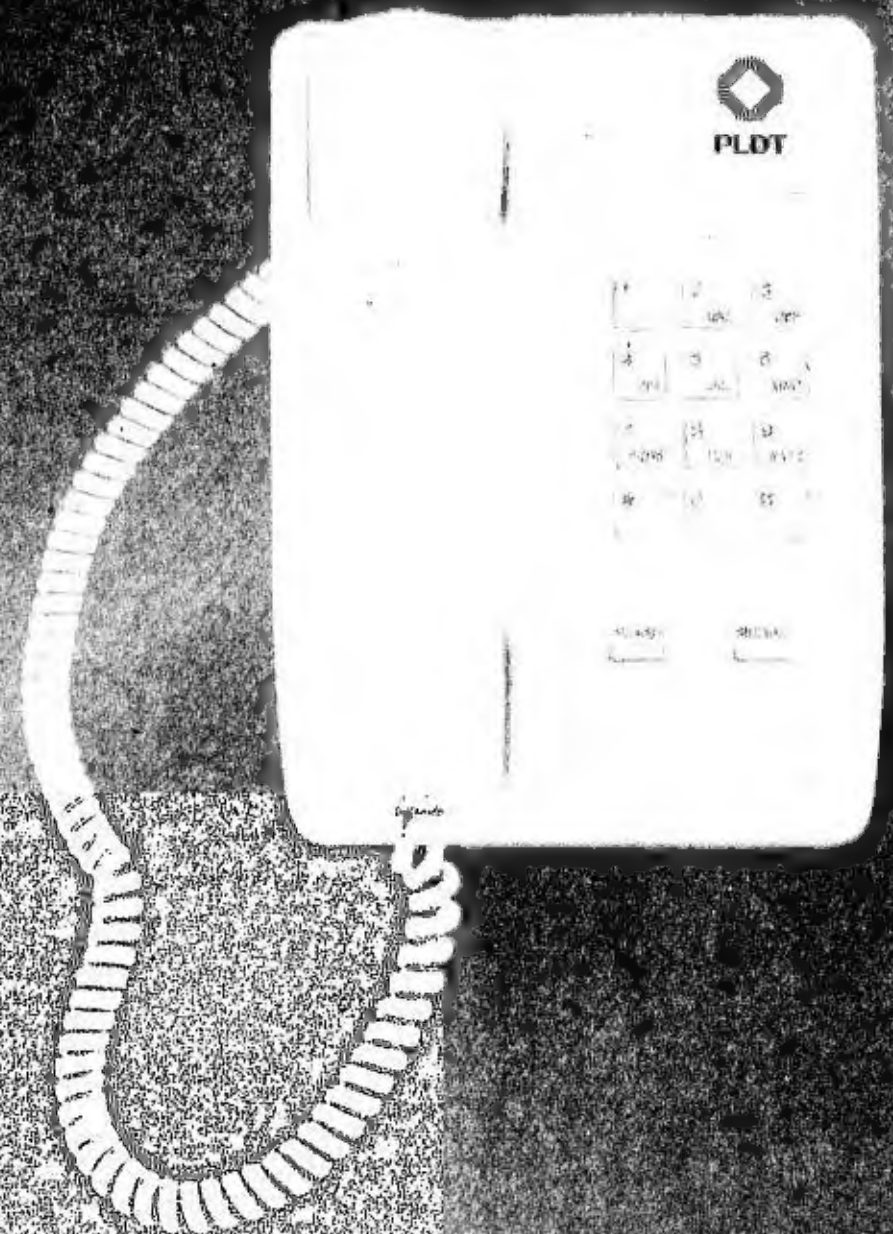
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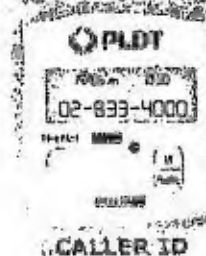
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MONITORING OF PREVAILING RETAIL PRICES OF PETROLEUM PRODUCTS IN METRO MANILA AS OF APRIL 7, 2002

LOCATION	NO. OF STATIONS	DIESEL	UNLEADED
McArthur Highway, Valenzuela			
Flying V	1	13.60	16.77
Petron	1	13.48	16.72
Pinoy	1	13.00 - 13.54	16.73 - 16.77
Total	1	13.00 - 13.54	16.77 - 16.89
Potrero, Malabon			
Caltex	1	13.59	16.27
Petron	1	12.99	16.22
Shell	1	13.54	16.77
Green Park, Kalookan City			
Caltex	1	13.54	16.81
Petron	2	13.30	16.81
Arasela Ave., Quezon City			
Caltex	1	13.54	16.77
Cityoil	1	13.48	16.74
Flying V	1	13.54	16.77
Shell	3	13.14 - 13.54	16.35 - 16.77
Cubao, Quezon City			
Caltex	1	13.55	16.80
Petron	3	13.29 - 13.57	16.64 - 16.89
Seacell	1	13.54	16.77
Shell	1	13.54	16.77
Mindanao Ave., Quezon City			
Caltex	2	13.54	16.77
Flying V	1	12.99	16.22
Petron	2	13.54	16.77
Seacell	1	12.99	16.22
Shell	2	13.54	16.77
A. Bonifacio St., Marikina City			
Caltex	2	13.54	16.77
Shell	1	13.54	16.77
Pres. Quirino Ave., Manila			
Caltex	1	13.03	16.08
Flying V	1	12.63	15.63
Metro Car Care F/S	1	12.93	15.48
Shell	1	13.53	16.30
Sampaloc, Manila			
Caltex	1	12.96	16.28
Diesel Station	1	13.16	
Petron	1	13.48	16.74
Seacell	1	12.40	15.60
Shell	1	13.54	16.77
Sta. Mesa, Manila			
Cityoil	1	13.48	16.65
Petron	1	13.43	16.75
Pinoy	1	12.59	15.93
Seacell	1	12.58	16.22
Shell	2	13.45 - 13.48	16.30
Greenhills, San Juan			
Caltex	2	13.53 - 13.54	16.33 - 16.32
Cityoil	2	13.53 - 13.54	16.33 - 16.32
Total	1		16.33
P. Guvarra St., San Juan			
Caltex	1		16.77
Petron	2	13.49	16.74
Posig Blvd., Pasig City			
Caltex	2		16.77
Petron	2	13.54	16.77
Seacell	1	13.51	16.34
Shell	2		16.77
Ortigas Ave. Ext., Calamba			
Caltex	1	13.54	16.77
Flying V	1	13.01	16.24
Petron	2	13.54	16.77
PTT	1	13.01	16.24
Seacell	1	13.01	16.24
Boul. Ave., Mandaluyong			
Caltex	1	13.53	16.89
Petron	1	13.50	16.77
Shell	1	13.54	16.77
Unoli	1	13.48	
Kamagong St., Makati City			
Caltex	1	13.58	16.78
Petron	1	13.48	16.74
Shell	1	13.54	16.30
Unoli	1	13.54	16.30
Makati Business District			
Caltex	1	13.58	17.24
Petron	1	13.54	16.80
Shell	1	13.54	16.85
Pasong Tamo, Makati City			
Caltex	2	13.58 - 13.78	17.16 - 17.28
Petron	1	13.54	16.84
Shell	1	13.54	16.89
Domestic Area, Pasay City			
Caltex	2	13.51	16.82 - 16.85
Petron	1		
Shell	1	13.58	16.86
Taguig			
Caltex	1	13.54	16.88
Lam-Gas	1	12.79	16.23
Petron	1		16.78
Shell	1	13.54	16.85
TEC G/S	1		16.84
Along Sucat Road, Parañaque City			
Caltex	4	13.51 - 13.54	16.88 - 16.89
Cityoil	1	13.45	16.85
Petron	3	13.48 - 13.54	16.86 - 16.89
Total	4	13.51 - 13.54	16.85 - 16.89
Unoli	1	13.51	16.85
Unoli	2	13.49	16.85
Muntinlupa City			
Caltex	3	13.50 - 13.54	16.88 - 16.89
Seacell	1		16.32
Petron	2	13.55 - 13.58	16.94 - 16.96
Shell	4	13.59	16.30 - 16.88
Total	1	13.52	
Alabang-Zapote Road, Las Piñas			
Caltex	2	13.54 - 13.58	16.79 - 16.83
Jetti	1	13.45	16.74
Petron	3	13.46 - 13.58	16.71 - 16.85
Shell	5	13.59 - 13.60	16.80 - 16.85

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Saddam: Iraq will fight US action with all means

BAGHDAD—Iraqi President Saddam Hussein on Sunday issued a strong message of defiance against the United States, saying his country would confront a US military action with all possible means, state-run Iraq television said.

"We will fight them with the reeds of the marshes, with stones, missiles and airplanes and with all that we have, and we will defeat them, God willing," Saddam said.

Saddam also said Iraq would continue support for the Palestinian intifada (uprising) despite US criticism.

"If Iraq had the chance, the ability to provide Palestinians with all they need to enable them to defend their land, sanctuaries, themselves and properties, it would do it," Saddam added.

He made the comments during a meeting with his Minister of Defense, his youngest son Qusay who controls the elite Republican Guards, the commander of Iraq's air-defense system, the Minister of Industry and a number of technicians.

"If half of your air-defense capability is destroyed you will fight with the other half and if the other half is destroyed you will fight with daggers as your brothers in Palestine do now," Saddam said.

"Have not they (the Palestinians) fought the developed enemy like America with daggers and with their bodies?"

Both the United States and Britain have stepped up the rhetoric against Iraq in recent weeks, fuelling speculation that a military strike may be imminent. Both administrations continue to stress, however, that no decisions have been made.

US President George W. Bush and British Prime Minister Tony Blair vowed on Saturday to tackle Saddam over the threat he poses with weapons of mass destruction, saying inaction was not an option.

Bush not yet planning attack, officials say

CRAWFORD, Texas—The Bush administration said on Sunday it was not yet planning a military campaign against Iraq but was looking at nonmilitary options, including revised sanctions, to pressure Saddam Hussein to admit weapons inspectors.

President George W. Bush has said "all options are on the table" to neutralize the threat Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein could pose with weapons of mass destruction. But he has yet to persuade key allies on the need for a military strike on Baghdad.

British Prime Minister Tony Blair, who visited Bush at his Texas ranch for talks on the Mideast conflict and Iraq, on Sunday gave the strongest signal yet that he would, "if necessary," back US-led military action against Saddam.

"We must be prepared to act where terrorism or weapons of mass destruction threaten us," Blair he told an audience at the George Bush Presidential Library

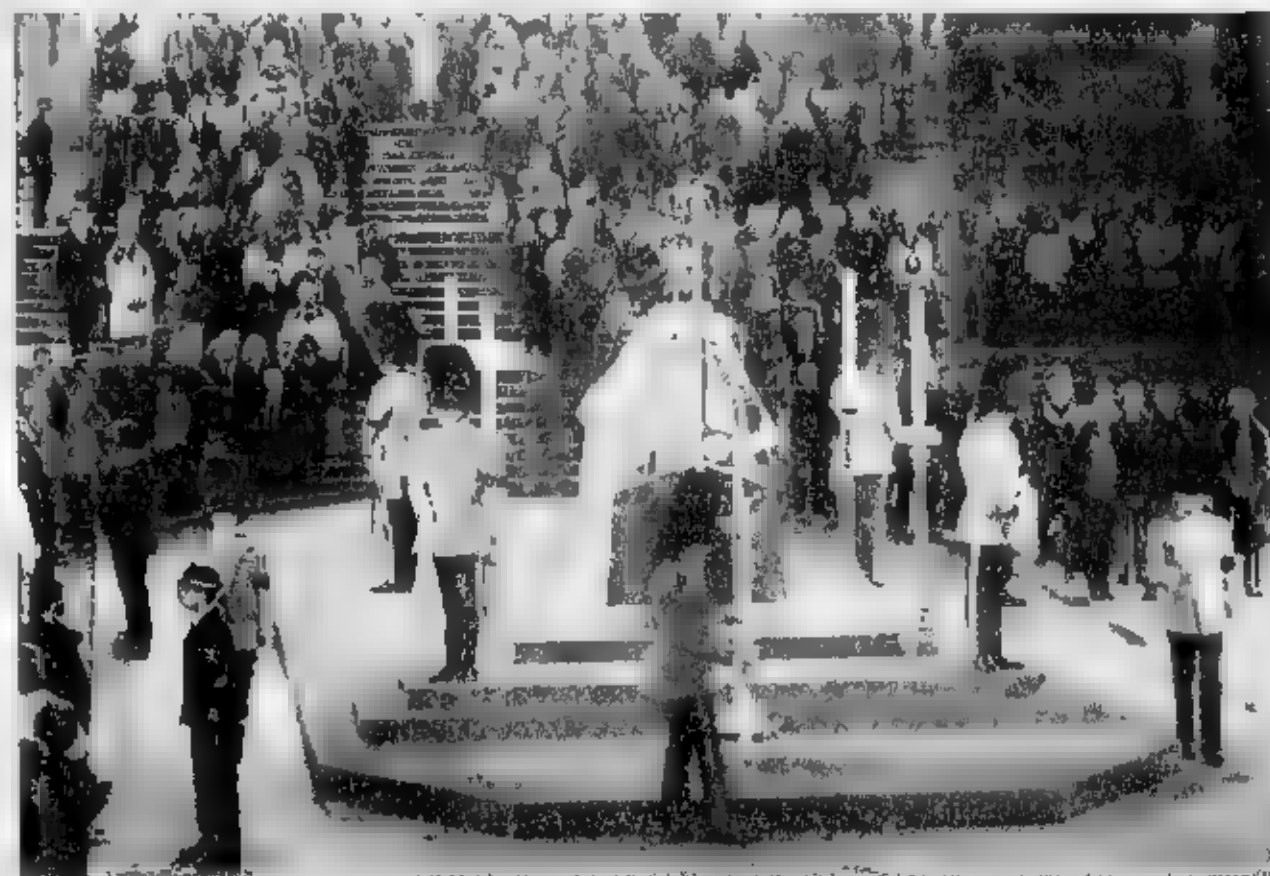
in College Station, after leaving the younger Bush's ranch.

During his talks with the US president, Blair told a news conference he was sure Saddam was developing weapons of mass destruction and had no doubt the Iraqi leader would use them against his enemies without hesitation.

"If necessary the action should be military and again, if necessary and justified, it should involve regime change," Blair said.

The British prime minister, however, faces stiff resistance from his partners in the European Union and at home if he backs any US plan to launch a military offensive against Baghdad.

Separately, Secretary of State Colin Powell said on the "Fox News Sunday" program that the administration "is not yet planning an operation against Iraq" and conceded that escalating violence in the Middle East was complicating "the consideration of options" for dealing with Saddam. **Reuters**



MEMBERS of the public file past the coffin of the Queen Mother as her remains lie in state in Westminster Hall in London, April 7. Thousands of people have queued to pay their last respects to the Queen Mother, who died on March 30 aged 101. Her funeral will take place on April 9 after which she will be interred at St. George's Chapel in Windsor next to her late husband King George VI. **Reuters**

Queen Elizabeth to deliver eulogy

LONDON—Britain's Queen Elizabeth is to deliver a television eulogy to her mother on Monday and thank more than 125,000 people who have filed past the coffin of the perennially popular "Queen Mum."

And the Queen Mother's four grandsons are to mount a vigil around the coffin of the 101-year-old matriarch who helped to steer the House of Windsor through a century of tumultuous change.

In a broadcast from Windsor Castle, the Queen is to offer heartfelt thanks to the thousands who paid their last respects and gave an unexpected filip to

a monarch whose family has been buffeted by divorce and scandal.

The Queen Mother's lying in state amid the medieval splendours of Westminster Hall has struck a chord with the British who have stoically queued for up to 12 hours to pay a fond farewell to Britain's World War II symbol of defiance.

"It is a very charming and well-mannered crowd," a police spokesperson said of the orderly queue of mourners who in true British style were given cups of tea as they waited in line.

After the death five years ago of Princess Diana in a Paris car crash, the

royal family was accused of being cold and uncaring as the British abandoned their traditional reserve in a national outpouring of grief.

Queen Elizabeth sought to defuse the bitterness then with a live broadcast praising Diana as "an exceptional and gifted human being."

This time, the royal family certainly could not be accused of being aloof. Heir-to-the-throne Prince Charles paid an emotional and moving tribute to his beloved grandmother as "gloriously unstoppable and magical." His television broadcast was widely praised. **Reuters**

Car bomb blast kills 12 in Colombia street

BOGOTA, Colombia—At least 12 people were killed and 70 injured when a powerful car bomb ripped through a crowded street lined with restaurants and nightclubs in Colombia early on Sunday, authorities said.

No armed group fighting in the country's 38-year-old war claimed responsibility for the attack in the provincial city of Villavicencio—the deadliest car bomb in recent years in Colombia. But the government quickly pinned the blame on Marxist FARC guerrillas.

"This was an absolutely demented

act against unarmed civilians," said Villavicencio mayor Omar Lopez. "It's a street with businesses and houses. The damage is enormous."

Police said the car bomb, packed with 50 kg of explosives, went off at around 1 10 a.m. local time, when crowds of mostly young people were enjoying a night out in a popular entertainment district of Villavicencio, a cattle and agriculture city of 350,000 people southeast of Bogota.

Minutes before the explosion, a smaller bomb went off, apparently to draw people into the area, police said

Among the dead was a young boy who sold cigarettes on the street.

President Andres Pastrana, who flew to Villavicencio and toured the devastated area, said indications were that the attacks had been carried out by the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, known by its Spanish initials as FARC.

"The first indications point toward the FARC. Terrorists will have no refuge anywhere in the world," said Pastrana, who last February broke off 3-year-old peace talks with the 17,000-member FARC. **Reuters**

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Across the NATION

Assistant Editor Tony Bergonia

Sayyaf not behind burning of GenSan malls, says PNP

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—Philippine National Police Chief Director General Leandro Mendoza dismissed reports that the Abu Sayyaf was behind the burning of two shopping malls here.

"I doubt if Alharakatul Islamiya or the Abu Sayyaf exists in General Santos," Mendoza said in a press conference held at Camp Permin G. Lira Jr. on Saturday afternoon.

Mendoza said local businessmen received extortion letters three days after the fire that razed Kimball Plaza, one of the biggest shopping centers in the city.

But he said the letters were too incredible.

"Masayadong mahusay 'yang English ng sumulat (The writer had perfect English). It seemed it was prepared by a professional," he said.

Owners of several big establishments here received extortion letters signed by a certain Abu Muslim Alghazie, who claimed to be the leader of the Abu

Sayyaf-Special Operations Group in the city.

Alghazie was asking for P500,000 in protection money from each establishment.

He warned that his group would take punitive actions against establishment owners who refuse to grant the group's demand.

Among the big establishments that received extortion letters were Hotel Dolores and Constar Lodge.

Mendoza said they were bringing copies of the letters for examination at Camp Crame to determine their authenticity.

Government soldiers, now with the help of military technology from the US, are still pursuing Abu Sayyaf bandits who are holed up in the jungles of Basilan.

The military has claimed some success in the pursuit operation, among them the killing of a ranking Abu Sayyaf leader.

Dozens of soldiers belonging to the elite Army Scout Rangers Battalion in Isabela City have started their search for the remains of Bakkal Hapilon, a rank-

ing Abu Sayyaf leader in the province.

Capt. Harold Cabunoc, chief of the 10th Scout Ranger Company, said they believed that Bakkal, younger brother of Isnilon Hapilon, was killed after suffering serious wounds during a March 23 encounter here.

"We've heard that Bakkal died in Barangay Marang-marang and that his body was reportedly buried there," Cabunoc told the Inquirer.

Cabunoc said based on reports they gathered, Bakkal died on March 25 from lack of medical attention.

Shortly after the March 23 encounter, an emissary, allegedly acting on Bakal's request, talked with military officials about the possibility of the wounded bandit leader being taken to a hospital.

During earlier negotiations, the emissary said Bakkal was willing to release local nurse Ediborah Yap in exchange for his treatment.

Col. Danilo Servando, Southern Command spokesperson, said the military was willing to treat the Abu Sayyaf

leader, but that Yap should be released first before any arrangement could be discussed.

Lt. Gen. Roy Cimatu, Southern Command chief, said after treatment, the Abu Sayyaf leader would have to face charges for his involvement in several abductions.

The talk did not prosper and Cabunoc said Bakkal was forced to seek treatment from a local faith healer.

"We are not saying that his death was confirmed that's why we are trying to locate his graveyard," Cabunoc said.

Col. Alexander Aleo, commander of the Army's 103rd Infantry Brigade, said the absence of engagements between the military and the bandits from March 24 could be attributed to Bakkal's reported death.

"He was the fighter among the group, and we learned that he led the previous encounters, so probably he is already dead. But we have to get confirmations," Aleo said.

Julie S. Alipala and Aquiles Z. Zonilo, PDI Mindanao Bureau

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST The whole country will experience partly cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms.

source: pagasa

Area	Weather	Temp
Manila	Clear to Partly Cloudy	HS 29° LS 24°
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	HS 25° LS 18°
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	HS 26° LS 21°
Luzon	Partly Cloudy	HS 24° LS 23°
Clark Zone	Clear to Partly Cloudy	HS 29° LS 24°
Tagaytay	Clear to Partly Cloudy	HS 27° LS 22°
Luzon	Partly Cloudy	HS 27° LS 24°
Cebu	Partly Cloudy	HS 27° LS 24°
Visayas	Partly Cloudy	HS 27° LS 24°
Mindanao	Partly Cloudy	HS 27° LS 24°
Palawan	Partly Cloudy	HS 27° LS 24°
Marikina	Partly Cloudy	HS 27° LS 24°
Quezon	Partly Cloudy	HS 27° LS 24°
Albay	Partly Cloudy	HS 27° LS 24°
Agusan	Partly Cloudy	HS 27° LS 24°
Davao	Partly Cloudy	HS 27° LS 24°

Compiled by Ray Lopez, PDI Research/04/09/02

ROUNDUP

Tagum fire kills 2

DAVAO CITY—Two persons were killed in a fire that destroyed eight houses in Tagum City early Saturday. The victims were identified as Teresita Sumangil, 45 and four-year-old Nelson Benkison, both residents of Abad Santos corner Lapu-Lapu Streets in Tagum City. Police said the fire started at the house of a certain Sayad at around 2:45 a.m. The victims were trapped inside their rooms when the fire spread to their houses. Fire investigators said faulty electrical wiring might have caused the fire.

Dennis Jay C. Santos, PDI Mindanao Bureau

5 missing in boat sinking

DAVAO CITY—Five persons were reported missing after a motorized boat capsized in waters off Malita, Davao del Sur, on Sunday morning. Police identified the missing as Maribel Castro, Jocelyn Alvarez, Francisco Mercado, Ann-Ann Boe and Alberto Caste. Reports said the missing persons were among the 25 passengers of the boat, owned by one Frankie Galias, who were headed for Barangay Kalbay in neighboring Jose Abad Santos town. But the boat sank 300 meters away from the Malita wharf.

Anthony S. Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Pirated VCDs destroyed

LEGAZPI CITY—Authorities led by Videogram Regulatory Board chair Luathel Buenafe on Thursday destroyed, using a bulldozer, at least 4,000 pirated video compact discs (VCDs) in front of the city hall. The VCDs were part of some 12,000 pieces seized by the National Bureau of Investigation from various establishments in the city. The NBI has retained some 8,000 VCDs for use as evidence in the prosecution of persons engaged in the illegal business.

Tony S. Macasiano, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Teens rob Chinese family

MAGA CITY—Five unidentified teenagers robbed a Chinese family here midnight Wednesday in the victims' house just a block away from the city hall. Supt. Ely Bron. Naga police chief said the robbers, armed with a handgun and bladed weapons, forced their way into the house, hogtied Grace Ching, 45, and other female household members. Bron said the robbers stabbed father and son Edgar and Edrick in the abdomen. The victims, however, survived and are now recuperating at the St. John Hospital here. Police said the robbers took with them P16,000 in cash, a gold necklace worth P15,000, two cell phones and clothes.

Juan Escander Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

1,043 gamblers nabbed

CAMP VICENTE—IM, Calamba City—Southern Tagalog police operatives have arrested 1,043 alleged illegal gamblers, mostly *cabos* (supervisors) and bet collectors. In the region during the first quarter this year. Police regional director Chief Supt. Domingo A. Reyes Jr. said Batangas has the most arrests with 327, followed by Rizal with 212 arrested and Laguna with 202. Quezon has 158 arrested; Mindoro 82; Cavite, 39; Palawan 5 and Romblon, 1.

Romulo D. Pineda, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Summer IT clinic

VIRAC, Catanduanes—Gov. Leandro B. Verceles Jr. is sponsoring a three-day free information technology clinic for his constituents to step up the development of the province's IT resources potential. The training will be in batches and will run from April 5 to May 15. Verceles set aside P580,000 as financial assistance to the participants. The clinic is open to all students, regardless of age. Catanduanes Internet Network (CatNet) coordinator Esquiel Mariano said about 10,000 students can be accommodated in the training, which will be held simultaneously in nine towns of the province.

Job B. Bolina, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Protest vs water rate hike

PILI, Camarines Sur—More than 100 members of consumers and farmers groups in this town held a protest rally in front of the Pili Water District (Pwad) office to oppose an increase in water rates and the use of water from the Himaao River here. Sandy Hubilla, chair of Pili Public Utilities Consumers Inc., said the increase from P9 to P14 per cubic meter of water is even higher than the rate Metro Manila is paying. But Pwad general manager Raul Divinagracia said the consumers approved the new rate in 1999.

Juan Escander Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

New fast craft

TABACLO CITY—Passengers bound for Catanduanes can now reach the island-province in less than 90 minutes through the newly launched fast seacraft, M/V Ma. Natasha. The fast seacraft can accommodate 96 passengers, Gabriel Bautista, shipping supervisor, said the seacraft has the round trips daily that start from this city's port at 5 a.m. and reaches San Andres, Catanduanes, at 6:26 a.m. The last trip from this port is at 8 p.m. Passengers are allowed to bring with them only hand-carried items in the seacraft.

Job Bolina, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau



TRUTH IN ADVERTISING

Why do politicians love to put their names on almost anything they could get their hands on? From milk cartons, sacks of rice, bags of groceries and, in this case, a roof of a complex in San Fernando, Pampanga, politicians make sure credit goes where it should.

Lack of water aggravates Ecija farmers' losses

By Anselmo Roque
PDI Central Luzon Desk

SCIENCE CITY OF MUÑOZ—Farmer Elmo Pajarillo of Barangay San Isidro in Lupao, Nueva Ecija, planted rice in his four-hectare farm this dry season as he used to do. He expected to harvest more than 300 cavans of rice.

But he harvested only 21 cavans which were not even equivalent to a fifth of the P40,000 he spent for planting and farm inputs.

Pajarillo said lack of water reduced his harvest.

"Our communal irrigation project ran dry. Our river also ran dry so there was no water to pump out," Pajarillo said in Filipino.

Pajarillo, president of the San Isidro Irrigators Association, said several farmers belonging to his group also suffered big losses because of the effects of the drought.

He said his members used to till more than 50 hectares of land but only about 20 hectares were planted to rice this cropping season. Despite the limited area, he said their irrigation supply was still not enough.

"There was also no water to be pumped out from the underground. This was the first time that it happened in many, many years," he said.

Nestor Fabianes, treasurer of the Bical-Bical Irrigators Association, also in Lupao,

said crops in 25 hectares of land in his area did not survive the drought.

Greg Correa, president of the Pampalang Samahang ng Magpapatubig sa Nueva Ecija, said only 200 of the 500 hectares of land that used to be planted during the dry season in Gabaldon town were used for the current rice cropping.

He said the rice plants in his area were in danger of being hit by the drought because of lack of water. He said the river in their village, the source of water for their communal irrigation system, is now almost dry.

Correa, who met with 15 other presidents of irrigators' associations in Nueva Ecija at the Central Luzon State University here Wednesday, said similar tales of woes of farmers were heard from the different towns in the province.

He said they came to CLSU to study the projects they could adopt to support them now that their rice cropping failed.

"We have to look for new sources of livelihood to tide us over for the next paddy cropping," Correa said.

Dr. Rodolfo Undan, CLSU president and former head of the National Irrigation Administration, presented them with livelihood projects that they could adopt.

Undan also showed the farmers some irrigation models using the pressurized irrigation system to help maximize the use of water.

John Prindiana, irrigation develop-

ment officer in the provincial irrigation office, said in Carrangian, Lupao and Sto. Domingo towns and in Muñoz and San Jose City, only 560 of the 1,700 hectares of rice land supported by the communal irrigation system were planted to rice this cropping season.

The reason cited by the farmers was lack of adequate water supply.

In other areas of Nueva Ecija, officials of the Upper Pampanga River Integrated Irrigation Systems said several farmers were caught illegally pumping irrigation water from the canals of the Pantabangan Dam.

The illegal pumping of water, they said, has triggered complaints from other farmers whose rice fields are in the upper areas.

They said water could hardly reach their farms because of the illegal pumping of water from the canals.

"They want their rice land to be flooded, that's why they are resorting to illegal pumping of water from the canals. They are supposed to wait for their turn in the rotation basis being done by our field officials," said Proceso Domingo, UPRIS project manager.

The fear that there may not be enough water to support standing crops during the drought has been forcing farmers to "steal" water, Domingo said.

He said the Pantabangan Dam is supporting 76,000 hectares of rice land in Nueva Ecija.

8 drug suspects arrested in police raid in Palawan

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—Elements of the Philippine National Police Task Force Banat arrested eight persons in Coron, Palawan, on Good Friday for possession of shabu and illegal possession of firearms, a police report said.

Insp. Edgardo Jagmis, task force leader, identified the suspects as Bobby G. Diaz, Sylvia Lim alias Bambu Lim, Mario Gesta alias Maloc, Jesus Vinluan alias Enot and Glenn, Ricardo Pe alias Eddie Pe, Genaro Vinluan alias Maru, Rogelio de la Cruz alias Junior, and Lenlen de la Cruz, all residents of Coron, Palawan.

They were separately arrested at 3 p.m., March 29, in Barangays 3, 5, Guadalupe and Tagumpay and charged with violation of the Dangerous Drugs Act and the law against the illegal possession of firearms.

Lim was reportedly able to post bail of P40,000 and is now back home in Coron.

She was reported to be a close relative of Gov. Joel T. Reyes.

Palawan provincial information officer Rolando Bonoan confirmed the reports but he said the governor has ordered the prosecution "even of relatives to rid the municipality of drug abuse problems."

Reyes is the chair of the Palawan Anti-Drug Abuse Program established under Provincial Ordinance No. 596.

Based on PNP records, Coron is considered one of the municipalities having the most serious drug problem in the province.

An Inquirer source, however, said the police did not weigh the amount of shabu seized from the suspects and could not give details of how much the seized drugs cost.

The apprehending team was composed of PNP personnel from the police stations of Coron, Baiabac, Taytay and Puerto Princesa City.

PNP Palawan OIC-provincial director Senior Supt. Michael Garera said he fielded policemen from other towns and the city of Puerto Princesa because Coron police alone could not effect the arrest warrant because they were identified by the suspects.

Seized from the group were packs of metamphetamine hydrochloride or shabu and one .38-cal. revolver and live ammunition for different firearms.

The suspects were brought to this city last Saturday and, except for Lim, are now detained at the PNP provincial headquarters. **Gerald P. Ticks, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau**

Tourism income triples in Western Visayas

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—Tourism posted a hefty growth in Western Visayas last year when most sectors of the economy in the region struggled amid the financial crisis.

Income from tourism nearly tripled from P4.346 billion in the year 2000 to P11.681 billion last year, according to the 2001 report released by the National Economic Development Authority in Western Visayas (NEDA-6).

The report showed 628,920 tourists went to the region last year, 10.16 percent higher than 570,898 tourists in 2000.

Quoting reports from the tourism department, domestic tourists comprised the bulk of visitors (524,292) while there were at least 104,638 foreign visitors.

Rowena Regaado, executive director of the Iloilo Business Club (IBC), said the figures reflected the state of tourism in Boracay.

The IBC is composed of around 90 senior executives of business firms here.

Despite the positive figures in tourism, she added, the business sector here expects "tougher times ahead."

She said the unresolved Abu Sayyaf hostage crisis and the Sept. 11 terror attacks are still hurting economic recovery efforts.

The NEDA report showed other businesses performed poorly.

Prices of basic commodities accelerated during the year with the average inflation rate reaching 5.2 percent. This is higher than 3.7 percent in 2000.

Prices of food, mainly dairy, poultry and canned goods, rose 4.2 percent from 2.7 percent in 2000.

Prices of other items rose 6.7 percent from 5.4 percent last year.

While employment improved slightly in the region from 88.1 percent in 2000 to 88.7 percent last year, unemployment continued to hound urban areas.

The Department of Labor and Employment in Western Visayas said 165 firms either closed shop or retrenched. Most of these firms were in the wholesale and retail trade, finance, insurance, real estate and business services, community, social and personal services and manufacturing sectors.

Priest freed, not rescued by police

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release was "a big step toward peace."

Pierce battle

"After a fierce battle in the mountains of Mindanao, we have rescued Father Pierantoni," the President said in a radio address marking the 60th anniversary of the fall of Bataan in World War II. "This was a very beautiful gift to me."

"We are slowly reaping the fruits of our efforts to combat terrorism, poverty, crime, corruption and the respect for the rule of law," the President said.

Pierantoni was not allowed interviews and was directly escorted to a side room of Malacañang's Reception Hall after he and Ms Macapagal issued their statements.

"He is still in a confused state. All the time he thought he was brought to Basilan so it was a big surprise to him when he was told that he was in Zamboanga," said Interior Secretary Jose Lina.

The Italian priest, a member of the Sacred Heart of Jesus Order and assistant parish priest of Dimataling, Zamboanga del Sur, was kidnapped on Oct. 17 after saying Mass.

It was not clear how government forces "rescued" Pierantoni.

Lina said Pierantoni was abandoned by his captors in Tungawan.

But military officials in Zamboanga Sibugay province said they did not know about Pierantoni's release.

No coordination

"He was released without us knowing it, and he was released to the PNP (Philippine National Police). There was no coordination whatsoever with the military," said Col. Pedro Cesar Ramboanga, chief of the 102nd Army Brigade based in Zamboanga Sibugay.

Even Senior Supt. Edwin Soledad, police chief for operations in Western Mindanao, could not say how the priest was freed. "We don't have any idea how Fr. Pierantoni was freed," he said.

But Ramboanga said he learned from the troops in Tungawan that somebody from Manila arranged the release of Pierantoni.

Fr. Jerry Sheehy, superior of Sacred Heart of Jesus Order, said that after the recovery of Pierantoni he was handed over to a certain Director Rey Velasco of the PNP, who brought him to Dipolog City where he boarded a plane bound for Manila.

Sheehy said Pierantoni's family in Bologna, Italy, had been informed of the good news.

"His family was very happy and thankful to the Lord for his safe release," he said.

Atutubo attributed the rescue to the information gathered following the arrest of Norhan Amil alias Commander Ramsey, and three of his followers on Friday.

"After interrogation and investigation, their statement helped in pinpointing the areas of the supposed hideouts," Atutubo said.

Mendoza version

PNP Director General Leandro Mendoza said in Malacañang that Pierantoni was recovered at about 2 a.m. following relentless operations by Task Force Mindanao, a special PNP group formed to free the priest.

Mendoza's own admission that "there was no firefight" before Pierantoni's recovery and that not one Pentagon member was arrested further fueled speculations that the Italian priest was released after payment of ransom.

"There was no ransom paid," Mendoza declared amid speculations that money changed hands for Pierantoni's freedom.

Mendoza said some 60 members of the Pentagon gang abandoned Pierantoni at the boundary of Zamboanga del Sur and Sibugay province after sensing the presence of some 100 Special Action Forces (SAF) in the area.

The rescue came a couple of days after government troops pinpointed the exact location of Pierantoni and his kidnappers.

Mendoza said there was no armed confrontation prior to the Italian priest's rescue, adding that SAF members did not fire on the kidnappers during the operation to ensure the safety of the kidnap victim.

"Now there's a hot pursuit operation against the kidnappers," he told a press briefing at the PNP head-



MARCHING orders from President Macapagal: Wupa out the Pentagon gang and all other kidnap gangs.

quarters in Camp Crame.

Director Reynaldo Velasco, director of PNP comptroller and deputy chief of the anti-kidnap Task Force Mindanao, and Chief Supt. Simeon Dizon, Region 9 director, led the troops that recovered Pierantoni.

Mendoza said in Malacañang that Pierantoni was abandoned by his captors after sensing that the police were closing in on them. He said the priest was found "walking."

"This is normal... they leave behind their hostages," Mendoza said.

He said that the last firefight between police forces and the Pentagon occurred two days ago and that this "massive operation in the Zamboanga Peninsula led to the recovery (of Pierantoni)."

"We're very aggressive in our op-

erations," Mendoza said, recalling that during the Feb. 7, 2002 founding anniversary of the PNP, the PNP was designated by Ms Macapagal to take the lead role in the campaign against the Pentagon group.

Sheehy also denied that ransom money was paid to the kidnappers.

In his March 16 letter to Bishop Zacarias Jimenez of Pagadian City, Pierantoni said his captors were demanding \$1 million in exchange for his freedom.

Jimenez also denied ransom was paid.

But Fr. Indra Pamungkas, an Indonesian and formator of the Sacred Heart of Jesus Seminary in Cagayan de Oro City, said ransom could have been paid.

Politicians-negotiators

Pamungkas said that if ransom was indeed paid, it did not come from the religious sector but from politicians who negotiated with an Italian engineer.

Epil Bishop Antonio Ledesma has called for an investigation of reports that ransom was paid to the abductors of Pierantoni.

In her statement, the President said that following Pierantoni's rescue, she is "directing the PNP and the AFP to intensify their operations to wipe out the Pentagon gang and all other kidnap gangs."

"We will not rest until this scourge has been wiped out of our land," Ms Macapagal said.

Her "marching orders" were: "Give them no quarters. Annihilate these criminal gangs."

The President appealed "to the people of Mindanao, to our Muslim brothers, to help us end this scourge of kidnapping."

The Pentagon group has still

about 100 members, according to Mendoza.

Mendoza said the PNP had deployed two battalions of its elite Special Action Force to go after the Pentagon group.

The Pentagon gang has been blamed in the past year for abducting an Italian, a Canadian, wealthy Filipinos and several Chinese engineers who were on a government irrigation project. One of the Chinese was killed and another wounded in a military rescue attempt. Pierre Belanger of Ottawa, Canada, was rescued two days before Christmas after two months in captivity.

The group has not released its Korean hostage Jae Kwon-yoon, who was kidnapped on Feb. 6, 2002 along with Filipino businessman Carlos Belonio in Maitum, Cotabato City. With reports from *Herman P. de la Cruz, Julie S. Allpala and Grace Cantal-Alvarez, PDI Mindanao Bureau, AP and AFP*

'A miracle of prayer,' says priest from Bologna

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something we got from nature like fish and vegetables from the forest," Pierantoni said.

"I ate also very strange things, including jellyfish and guanas and potatoes which are poisonous and have to be prepared very carefully to be edible."

The priest said Pentagon leaders had assured him he would not be harmed and that they kidnapped him on Oct. 17 to raise ransom money to buy arms and defend themselves from the army.

Dialogue

"It was an experience of dialogue, because they were Muslims with very simple ideas of their religion. It was interesting to listen to their experience of suffering and hopes of liberating Mindanao," he said.

Pierantoni said he planned to return to Italy and visit his elderly

parents, who became desperately worried after erroneous military reports last year that he had been killed.

However, he planned to return to his Dimataling parish in Zamboanga del Sur province soon.

"My parents are victims of the kidnapping too, can you imagine what it means for them to believe that their son is dead for six months?" the missionary said.

"I want to go back to the South surely, I don't think they will kidnap me again, do you?" he said.

"There is a miracle in order to get me free and without any harm and suffering," Pierantoni said. "I am really very, very thankful, very grateful to God and also to the Philippine government and all those who really showed solidarity to me."

He particularly thanked Pagadian City Bishop Zacarias Jimenez and "his flock for what they did to me," *AFP and Carillo Pablo*

PVAO owes veterans P17.3 billion in benefits

From page A1

she told the Inquirer. "So we did some checking and we're shocked to find out that somebody from Allaga town, Nueva Ecija, used my husband's name in filing the claim. The same person also used my husband's alias, which was Agustin, his surname, in the same claim for old-age pension."

"Why did PVAO allow such things to happen?" she asked.

Eighty-year-old Rafaela Narciso of Guimba town, also in Nueva Ecija, has the same problem. "A certain Leonila from the municipality of Sto. Domingo has been using my name since 1999 in getting the monthly old-age pension," Narciso said.

Their problems are "definitely not isolated cases," said former Huk supreme Luis Taruc. "There are many other war veterans and surviving spouses of veterans with the same problem."

"Some PVAO fixers were most likely responsible for the irregularity," he said. "But fixers who prey on old and poor war veterans won't be so daring if they have no contacts at the PVAO office."

"It always takes two to tango," he added.

Fixers' mafia

Emmanuel de Ocampo, president of the Veterans Federation of the Philippines (VFP), believes graft and corruption has been "there at PVAO all the time."

"An octopus-like mafia is behind most, if not all, the financial anomalies at PVAO," De Ocampo said.

"And you cannot say that that mafia was born just yesterday. There were already reports of anomalies when PVAO was still based in Arroceros Street (near Manila City Hall). And that was 30 years ago.

The same group of corrupt insiders was behind the inclusion of fake war veterans in the PVAO roster," the retired Army colonel said.

Retired Navy Commodore Artemio Arugay, who assumed his post as PVAO administrator only last year, confirmed what he called "reports of corruption" at the agency.

He disclosed, among other things, that "even bank remittance forms for old-age pension which are supposed to be free of charge are being sold for P300 apiece."

Arugay, also a former vice chair of the Armed Forces Modernization Board, claimed "it's the work of fixers. If there are fixers outside the PVAO office, there are also fixers inside. I believe most of the fixers are outsiders."

"It's difficult to pinpoint who the fixers are but one way of killing their illegal operation is preventing third-party follow-ups on claims. We even require children of pension claimants to show a special power of attorney before we entertain their queries on any claim," Arugay said.

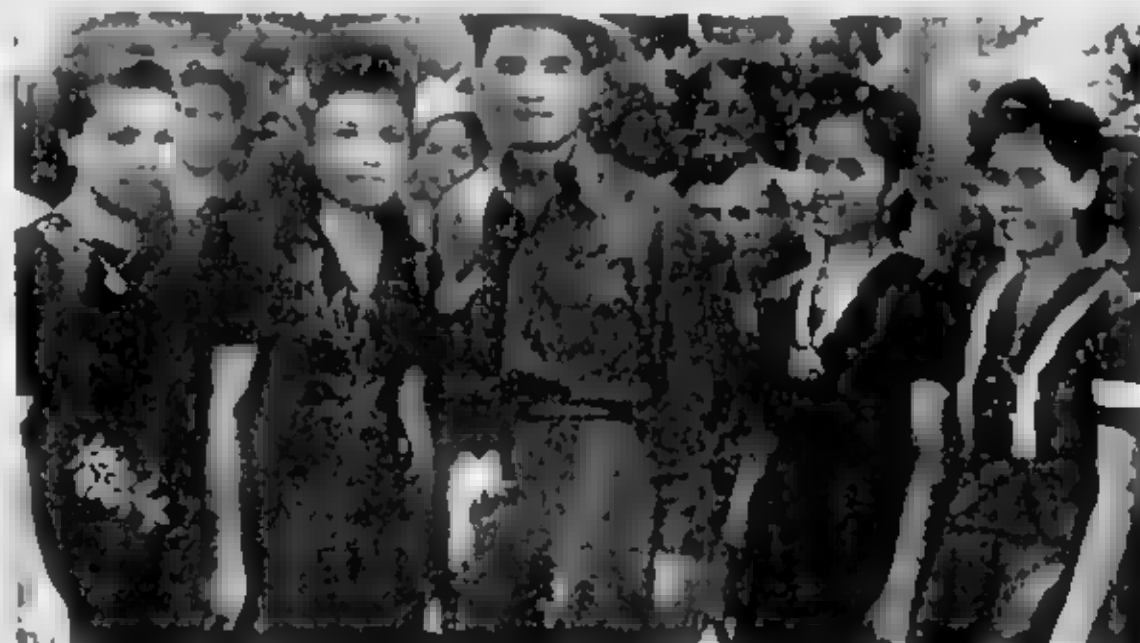
Aside from "getting rid of fixers," Arugay said there was a "need to cleanse the PVAO roster of fake veterans and fake pension claimants, too."

Fake guerrillas

Fake guerrilla groups are "a dime a dozen," De Ocampo said.

"I'm very fortunate that I know almost all these guerrilla organizations in Central and Southern Luzon. In the Sierra Madre mountain range alone, there were only 3,000 guerrillas during the war. But after the war, there were 200,000."

Arugay said PVAO "funds are limited but (this doesn't) stop thousands of people from filing claims. Any employee can be tempted from en-



1948: Huk Supreme Luis Taruc with close relatives and supporters in Barrio San Agustin, San Luis, Pangasinan shortly before he boarded a plane for Manila to meet with President Elpidio Quirino who offered him amnesty.

gaging in some irregular practices to make easy money."

He said he has "put up a one-stop shop for the processing of claims. Another top priority is the core value formation program," he said.

Just recently, PVAO dismissed two of its employees found faking their civil service eligibility and academic records. Arugay said he has also "ordered the reshuffling of personnel, and had those allegedly involved in irregularities investigated."

"We cannot eliminate graft and corruption here overnight. But let me assure the veterans and the public in general that we're doing something about the problem," he said.

De Ocampo said Arugay needed

"time to sanitize the list of veteran pensioners, get rid of the fixers and corrupt personnel at PVAO. He is still new there and it's just fair to give him time. We have to take into consideration the fact that he is also a victim of the same mafia." The VFP head did not elaborate.

The Commission on Audit has been an active partner of the PVAO in its ongoing purge of fake veteran pensioners from its roster. In another initiative to "come up with a list void of invalid claims," PVAO last November forged a memorandum of agreement with the National Statistics Office.

"We want to make sure that only certified veterans are given pensions and benefits as mandated by law. This is another way of freeing PVAO

from the public perception that it is a graft-and-corruption ridden agency," Arugay said.

From postal to bank remittance

Another PVAO thrust is shifting the mode of pension payment from the postal system to a bank remittance program. In January, up to P623 million in benefits were still being remitted to pensioners by post.

The PVAO budget for 2002 amounts to P13.3 billion, including P11.6 billion for 205,056 old-age pensioners; P642.7 million for 39,822 death pensioners; and P246 million for 17,963 disability pensioners.

This year, however, Arugay

said PVAO "won't be able to settle its arrears to veterans amounting to P17.3 billion (P3.16 billion in old-age pensions and P14.1 billion in total administrative disability pensions)."

"We're addressing the arrears issue now," he said. "We formed a committee to look into this problem." PVAO is considering two options: "giving the veterans a one-time lump sum gratuity and paying the arrears through a combination of appropriation and floating of bonds."

Insufficient funds

Rep. Tomas Dumplis, chair of the House committee on veterans affairs, admitted that "there's not enough funds for veterans' benefits."

"But we're trying to find ways to raise funds like setting aside money for the disability benefits. We have requested the budget and finance departments to allocate at least P3 billion each year until the P14-billion arrears have been offset," he said.

The La Union legislator, also vice chair of the House national defense panel, claimed, "funding for veterans is still a government priority. But you must bear in mind that the total budget now of PVAO is more than P12 billion and every year it is increasing. Pension funds also increase by P500 each year."

He said he was optimistic PVAO's financial woes "will be settled in about five years. (Or) three years if the economic situation in the country improves. By that time, we can increase the veterans' allocation by P3 billion to P5 billion each year."

The clock, however, is inexorably ticking.

Taruc, the Huk founder, asked the obvious, plaintive question: "What good is the grass if the horse is already dead?"

'The Americans ate canned goods, we ate grass...'

By Jerry Espinada and Dona Pazzibugan

"WHERE is their debt of gratitude?"

Luis Taruc, the former Huk supreme, lamented the fate of the Huk guerrillas—forgotten by time and neglected by the authorities.

"Many Americans hid behind Filipino soldiers and guerrillas. The Americans ate canned goods. We ate even the grass and the leaves of trees. They wore colorful uniforms. We wore barefoot," Taruc said in Filipino.

"In 1945, we helped liberate some 4,000 prisoners of war

(POWs) at the University of Sto. Tomas and about 2,600 POWs at UP-Los Baños. When the Huks reached Obando, Bulacan, they were disarmed by the Americans. They were later moved to a Malolos jail. There, they were killed by so-called Usafte guerrillas. We call them 'bulasafte,' or bandits posing as guerrillas, the same people who welcomed US troops with fried chicken and women. Many of these 'bulasafte' are now receiving old-age pension. It's so unfair."

Whether President Macapagal-Arroyo singles out the Huk veterans for special mention today at the Mt. Bamat Shrine in Pilar, Bataan, this morning, where she will pay homage to the heroes and

veterans of World War II, remains to be seen.

"To these brave hearts who fell in Bataan and Corregidor, and in the many other places and times, let us join hands in common bereavement," she said in her message for Araw ng Kagitingan.

She did observe that this year's celebration of Araw ng Kagitingan comes at a time when the RP-US Balikatan military exercises are ongoing.

"Today's celebration is dedicated to the ideals of freedom, unity and progress. It comes at a time when we are in the midst of the Balikatan 02-1... an essential step in mutually strengthening military capabilities to respond to

the global threat of terrorism," she said.

Former Huks have lamented that more attention has been given to communist and separatist rebels than former guerrillas and others who risked their lives to defend the country. Taruc expressed hope "the administration... finally wakes up from its deep slumber and recognizes the heroism and sacrifice of all Huks during the Second World War."

"When that time comes, Huku will finally wipe away the tears of injustice and indifference they suffered during the past 57 years," he said. "We're not giving up."

Feeling right...

From page A1

The man and woman were talking quietly oblivious to their palatial surroundings. She wore slippers and an orange "duster," which most housewives wear at home.

Taking a closer look, the reporters saw that it was President Macapagal herself and her husband, Mr. Mike Arroyo. The First Couple had been walking their dogs—five or seven of them at the time—at the wide expanse of lawn fronting Kalayaan Hall.

A Presidential Security Group (PSG) guard on duty that night was also surprised. He said it was the first time he saw the First Couple walking their dogs on the

Kalayaan grounds.

Except for the reporters and the PSG guards on duty, there was nobody else around to see the First Couple being just husband and wife who are dog lovers.

Three of the presidential dogs, a dalmatian, a golden retriever and a rottweiler were commissioned into military service last month after they completed a four-month training by the PSG's K-9 unit dubbed Home of the Sniffers Inside Malacañang Park.

The First Couple's own dogs are now employed to do the bomb sniffing inside the private quarters of the Arroyo family.

The heavy iron Kalayaan gates were closed all the time the First Couple were walking their dogs.

MBA FIRST CONFERENCE Negros, Olongapo target share of lead

By Roy Luanca

GAME TODAY (Olongapo Convention)
6 p.m.—Negros vs Olongapo

TWO playing days, two overtimes. Competition in the MBA First Conference is turning out to be keener than expected.

In the inaugurals on Saturday, the Cebuana Lhuillier Gems bested the Osaka Pangasinan Waves, 109-99, after being held to a 91-all count in regulation play at the Cebu Coliseum. On Sunday, it was the turn of the RCPI Negros Slashers to walk the tightrope before subduing the LBC Batangas Blades, 76-67, at the Olongapo Convention Center.

Another close encounter is expected when RCPI Negros and Olongapo clash at 6 p.m. to-

day in the Metropolitan Basketball Association First Conference at the Olongapo Convention Center.

The Slashers and the Olongapo Volunteers both won their first assignments on Sunday to tie Cebuana Lhuillier and Professional Davao Eagles on top of the eight-team field.

The debuting Volunteers downed the LBC Batangas Blades, 90-85, at the Olongapo Convention Center also on Saturday.

Led by Fil-Am Jeffrey Flowers, the Volunteers preserved a 68-59 third quarter lead and then banked on a clutch jumper by Brixter Encarnacion to subdue the Blades, the reigning national titlists.

The 6-foot-8 Flowers wound up with a game-high 29 points aside from dominating the shaded lane, while the 6-foot-4 Encarnacion contributed 15. Coch Junel Baculi also drew offensive might, from Johnedel

Cardel, who fired 19 points, and Henry Fernandez, who chipped in 16.

Tourism Secretary Dick Gordon and Olongapo City Mayor Kate Gordon led their constituents in cheering the Volunteers, the league's newest member in the Northern Conference.

Alex Compton scored 25 points for the Blades, followed by Jeffrey Sanders with 17 and 2001 MVP Eddie Laure with 14.

Mon Tuason, MBA director for marketing and business development, said the first two playing days both drew sellout crowds, affirming the league's strong drawing power.

Cebuana Lhuillier and Professional Davao Eagles are disputing the solo lead at presstime at the Cebu Coliseum.

MBA games on Saturdays and Sundays are telecast over National Broadcasting Network 4.

Blu, Kutitap score contrasting wins

By Dennis U. Erosa

GAMES TOMORROW (Makati Coliseum)
4 p.m.—Shark vs Ateneo
6 p.m.—Montana vs Ane

FORMER Rookie of the Year Marion Legaspi and John Paul Prior excelled as Blu Sun Power turned back newcomer John O-Jazz, 76-69, yesterday even as Kutitap outgunned RP Youth, 101-72. In the PBL Chairman's Cup at the Pasig Sports Center.

In the nightcap, International Container Terminal Services Inc.-La Salle blasted Ana Freezers, 88-71, and joined Kutitap on top of the leaderboard with two straight wins.

The 6-foot-5 Legaspi, named top rookie two seasons ago, taught Raniel de Ocampo a neat lesson in defense, while the 5-foot-7 Prior secured Blu's first victory in two games when he nailed a crucial three-pointer with ticks left in the game.

Prior scored his team's last four points from the charity lane.

Legaspi escaped with 18 points and frustrated the 6-foot-5 De Ocampo underneath with his umbrella-like defenses as the Detergent Kings held their ground in the final 10 minutes of play.

Slippery Froilan Baguion gave the Juzzers their last taste of the lead with a lay-up, 63-61, but Miko Roldan, Legaspi and Tris Codamon answered with three straight baskets. The roof caved in on the Juzzers as Prior turned a Baguion error into a crunching triple, 72-65, two minutes remaining.

With former teammate Egay Billores, now with FedEx, cheering from the stands, Blu raced to a 44-35 halftime edge behind Aries Dimaunahan, Legaspi and Prior.

Kutitap was simply too powerful for the nationals, who are using this tournament to prepare for two international tournaments.

Cyrus Baguio, Allan Salangsang and Niño

Gelig all finished in double figures as the Sparklers never relinquished a 27-18 first quarter lead.

SCORES

KUTITAP 101—Baguio 17, Salangsang 16, Gelig 14, Mercado 8, Saquiayan 8, Jones 8, Espiritu 7, Luanzon 6, Rivera 5, Razon 4, Dy 2, Sison 2, Maiari 2, Yuson 2.

RP YOUTH 72—Benitez 15, Nkemakol 14, Torculas 9, Arao 8, Fernandez 7, Balboa 5, Agbayani 3, Malaguano 2, Baidos 2, Aguilar 2, Porras 2, Cecilia 2, Tayer 1.

Quarters: 27-18, 55-30, 82-50, 101-72.

Second Game

BLU 76—Legaspi 18, Prior 14, Codamon 11, Dimaunahan 9, Roldan 8, Gottenbos 5, Mendez 5, Santos 4, Gatumbato 2, Caio 2.

JOHN O-JUZZ 69—Cayabyab 20, Baguion 13, Napa 11, De Ocampo 8, Santos 7, Ulaguer 4, Barbosa 2, Booker 2, Manabat 2, Tolentino 0, Salvador 0, Ferrer 0.

Quarters: 26-21, 44-35, 59-50, 76-69.

Golf for Samar set April 12 at Valley course

A GOLF tournament dubbed "Swing for a Cause" will be held April 12 at Valley in Antipolo City to raise funds for the Catbalogan-based Samar National School (SNS).

This was announced yesterday by lawyer Plandel Bohol II, tournament director. He said a special surprise package of prizes await lucky participants. Tee-off time will be 10 a.m.

Bohol said all Samareños and residents of Catbalogan now based in Metro Manila are welcomed to join the day-long tournament and be of help to SNS. The SNS, he said, is celebrating its 90th foundation day and general alumni homecoming from April 22 to 28. Education Secretary Raul S. Roco will be the guest of honor and speaker during the grand alumni night on April 27. He will be introduced by Rep. Antonio "Eddie" Nachura.

Honorees of this year's celebration who will be feted with a testimonial dinner on April 25 will be the silver jubilarian class of 1977 and golden jubilarian class of 1952 led by former Leyte Congressman Sergio F.A. Apostol, presently the chair, president and chief executive officer of the Philippine National Oil Company.

Bohol called on all SNS alumni to help the school, which is in need of basic facilities such as arm chairs, textbook and teachers' manuals, overhead projector for science classes, among others.

For more details, the host class secretariat may be contacted at 921-0328 or 416-5483.

Kagitingan beats Villamor

KAGITINGAN overwhelmed the opposition with its well-balanced attack, winning the Jungolf Interclub championship by a hefty 17 strokes over Villamor recently at the Manila Golf Club.

Davao eyes 3rd title

DAVAO'S lady booters bid for a third straight title as the 6th National Women's Championship unwraps tomorrow at the Philsports field in Pasig City and the Ateneo turf in Quezon City.

Eleven other teams from all over the country will try to spoil Davao's ambition in the tourney which ends on April 14.

These are Alumnae Football Club representing the National Capital Region, Baguio City, Laguna Selection, SLP Laboratory High School (Quezon province), San Vicente National High School (Camarines Norte, Masbate City), University of St. La Salle (Negros Occidental), Dumaguete Football Club (Negros Oriental), University of San Carlos (Cebu), Ateneo de Zamboanga and Rizal.

Philippine Football Federation president Rene Z. Adad, PFF general secretary Miguel Melchor Villadolid and Philippine Ladies' Football Association founder Crispy Ramos will grace the 1:30 p.m. opening ceremony at the Philsports pitch.

The teams will be divided into three groups in the elimination stage. The top squad in each group plus the best second team will advance to the crossover semifinals, with the winners disputing the title.

The draw to determine the groupings will be made during the managers' meeting at 5 p.m. today at the PFF conference room in the Philsports building. Rachelle delos Reyes, the Davao Selection, is the early favorite to rule the event organized by the PFF.

France, US, Russia, Argentina advance

LONDON—Fabrice Santoro outlasted Bohdan Ukhrech in a five-set final match on Sunday to put defending champion France into the semi-final of the Davis Cup.

After Jiri Novak had followed up his victory over Nicolas Escude with a 3-6, 6-1, 6-3, 6-1 triumph over Sebastian Grosjean to keep Czech hopes alive at 2-2, Santoro clinched a French victory despite throwing away a two sets lead.

The United States took an unbeatable 3-1 lead over Spain after Andy Roddick defeated Alberto Martin 6-2, 6-4, 6-2 on grass in Houston, Texas.

Russia completed a 4-1 victory over Sweden in Moscow, while Argentina advanced by edging Croatia 3-2 in Buenos Aires when Gaston Gaudio topped Ivo Karlovic 6-4, 6-4, 6-2 in their quarterfinal's last match.

Danding co-host of Mandaluyong derby tonight

A BIG group of well-known gamefowl breeders from Negros Occidental will challenge their counterparts in Metro Manila when the 8th Ucap Bumble Bee Balbina/Roadmaster 7-Cock Derby gets under way today at Mandaluyong Coliseum. Sponsors are Sagupaan Super Feeds and Washout Shampoo of Lakpue Drug.

Derby hosts are former ambassador Danding Cojuangco and his longtime sabong partner Pete Rodriguez, team manager of the Balbina Group.

Among the Negros cockers seeing action are

Elwin Javelosa, Otic Geroso, Boy Nilo Lizares, Danilo Hino, Nene Abeilo, Al Garcia, Arnold Mendoza.

Saipan cocker Jun Marasigan, one of three champions in the 2002 Manda.uyong International 9-Cock Derby in January, is also competing.

Meanwhile, the 9th Ucap San Pedro GP Bacolod Group 7-Cock Derby fires off on April 16 and 18 with Jet Fernandez, Ramon Mansanares and the Bacolod Group as hosts.

Interested parties, call 534-4110, 531 4003, 531-4005 and 535-2341.



TOO CLOSE FOR COMFORT

Los Angeles Lakers guard Kobe Bryant (right) attempts to drive past Miami Heat guard Kendall Gill (13) in the fourth quarter yesterday in Miami. The Lakers won, 96-88. Returning Shaquille O'Neal scored 40 points as he pushed Miami nearer to elimination. **COMPLETE RESULTS:** Philadelphia 89, Milwaukee 87; Toronto 94, Indiana 84; L.A. Lakers 96, Miami 88; Boston 102, New Jersey 90; Sacramento 116, New York 82; L.A. Clippers 97, Denver 75.

Law student carries QC to chess victory

KIDAPAWAN CITY Rex Ami, a part-time chess player, went two-for-two in the finals to carry Quezon City A to a tie romp over dethroned champion Mandaluyong A Sunday night at the close of the National Inter-Cities and Municipalities chess championship at the Highlander Hotel here.

Ami, playing board three, scored a critical 55-move win over Ruston Tolentino to secure a draw for QC A in the second playoff match and preserve a 4.5-3.5 decision over Mandaluyong A.

It was Ami's second straight win over Tolentino in the finals.

"I knew I needed to win this because if we ended up tied,

Mandaluyong will retain the crown," said Ami who is taking up law at the Baguio Colleges Foundation in Baguio City.

The 26-year-old Ami, playing white, won a pawn in the middlegame of what started as a Queen's Gambit match, and nursed the material advantage to victory.

The first two boards ended in draws with Grandmasters Eugene Torre and Joey Antonio settling for a friendly draw after 16 moves of a Trompovsky.

North Cotabato Gov. Manny Pilit, who co-hosted the National Chess Federation of the Philippines event with Kidapawan Mayor Luis Malaluan, handed out the prizes to the winners.

SPORTSWATCH

Mountaineers, outdoors enthusiasts gather

IN commemoration of the 2002 International year of mountains, Globe Adventure Club, Mountaineering Exploration Society of Adamson University and Sang-at Salung Outdoor Club will host the 23rd Mountaineering Federation of the Philippines Inc. annual climb in Nueva Vizcaya on April 16-21. The MFPI Annual Congress is a gathering of mountaineers and outdoors enthusiasts. Every year, they gather to renew their love for the environment, rekindle their age-old spirit of camaraderie and take part in the socially relevant and full-filled activities. Aside from awareness and preservation of the environment this year the congress will also focus on the life and culture of the indigenous tribe of Nueva Vizcaya. For more information, log on to <http://www.23rdmfpiannualcongress.com.ph>

Rizal stadium table tennis venue

THE FIRST Tatap National Table Tennis Selection kicks off on April 15-21 at the Rizal Memorial Stadium. The top participants in five different divisions—men's singles, women's singles, boys' singles 15-and-under, and girls' singles 15-and-under—will automatically join the national team. Registration fee is P200 for men's and women's singles and P100 for boys' and girls' 15-and-under. Interested parties may send their application forms to Rm. 203 Administration Bldg., Rizal Memorial Sports Complex, P. Ocampo Street, Manila or through fax no. 404-1470. For more information, call Tatap office at 522-1885.

New footwear debuts at Fashion Week

CLIMACOO™, adidas footwear innovation featuring a 360° ventilation system, makes its Philippine debut at the Philippine Fashion Week extravaganza on April 11. Through the introduction of new, breathable materials in all areas of the shoe, Climacool™ allows consumers' feet to "feel the breeze." The Climacool™ concept was born and developed within the adidas Innovation team (A.I.T.). The goal was to develop a functional shoe that featured a complete ventilation system. At the adidas Global Test Center in Schwaighausen, Germany, the Climacool™ range was evaluated with respect to temperature, moisture management, stability and cushioning. Tests comparing Climacool™ to conventional footwear proved that Climacool™ shoes kept feet 20 percent cooler and drier.

Ray of hope

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza



IT was a perfect weekend for Philippine sports. The reason being that we won our Davis Cup tie against Kuwait.

It was not so much over the way we scored the victory, which was not really that convincing. It was more of the fact that we won than anything, the truth of triumph being almost the crux of all competitions.

You win by either a single point or 50 points in basketball, it won't really matter that much.

You win either by a stroke or 10 strokes in golf, it won't really matter that much.

You win either by a first round knockout or a points verdict in boxing, it won't really matter that much.

If anything, the drama behind each victory will be merely gravy.

For, at the end of the day, what matters is the outcome: victory. Winning is such sweet syrup it drowns out even the slightest taste of bitterness in it, if ever there is one.

The country had been touted to rout Kuwait, not really known for tennis excellence. Like many countries in Asia, Kuwait's national pastime is also football. But even though basketball is our passion, tennis has

remained a romance. To us, the racket game is like childhood. It doesn't die with adulthood. Height is not a major factor: unlike basketball, you don't really need height to win in tennis.

Felicitimo Ampon is the eternal model.

Getting the monicker "The Mighty Mite" of world tennis because he was barely five feet tall (or short?), Ampon was, and still is, the reason the game has become almost permanently etched in our hearts. It was Ampon's exploits in the Fifties that have kept the fires burning. Without Ampon, perhaps there would be no tennis tenacity that we could proudly speak of when it came to the Filipino's love for the game.

It was not a breast-beating, 3-2 victory over Davis Cuppers had pulled off last weekend. As I said, the Kuwaitis were not expected to win in the first place. To them, tennis is but a hobby.

But still, I see a ray of hope. Philippine tennis is not about to quit and surrender. Col. Buddy Andrada, the tennis head, had proved his detractors wrong. Hey, sir, why not salute Adelo Abadia for a job well done? I have just done my own saluting, sir.

The 25-year-old Abadia, playing in his fourth Davis Cup, beat with ease Mossad Al Jazzaf in the deciding fifth match for the clincher. The score: 6-3, 6-2, 6-1.

Had Abadia lost, it would have been the summit of embarrassment for Philippine tennis. You see, Jazzaf is a raw teenager, a 17-year-old seeing only his second Davis Cup. Got the drift?

But again, this is not to belittle the triumph. As I have always maintained, a win is a win is a win. A rose by any name will always smell sweet.

And so to Abadia and his teammates Johnny Arcilla, Joseph Victorino and Michael Mora III, I offer to each one of you a warm handshake. To non-playing captain Johnny Jose, himself a many-time Davis Cupper with memorable victories of his own, here's a glass.

Rout or no rout, you all did the country proud.

Exalta Superio reaches Visayas

CARIGARA—The Nissan Exalta GS Superio team, which is going on an island-hopping odyssey for 30 days in the fourth Pan Philippine Marathon, is on the right track despite difficulty in getting in touch with the rally's secretariat in Quezon City owing to the lack of cell sites.

With a 1,097-kilometer reading in the Goodyear odometer after being flagged off at the Eastwood City in Pasig at noon on Friday, the powerful but fuel efficient 1.6-liter engine car with an automatic transmission that changes gear without missing a heartbeat is raring to show more.

After surviving the bad roads of Quezon and Bicol, the Exalta made a ferry crossing on board the Maharlika 4 en route to the picturesque San Juanico Bridge on Saturday night.

At 9 a.m. Sunday, Philtranco-Leyte area manager Arnie Obsanga signed the team's proof of passage in downtown Tacloban before leaving two hours later for its first major assault of the Visayas via Ormoc, Baybay, Sogod, Liloan and Maasin.

In the Queen City of the South, the team was met by officials of Nissan-Cebu and the local media for lunch and a question-and-answer session.

MJC starts 6-day race week

MANILA Jockey Club jumpstarts its six-day race week tonight with an explosive opening card of 9-races propped up by a hefty carryover amount of P827,558.19 in the popular Winner-Take-All (WTA) event.

Horse racing aficionados are expected to troop to the San Lazaro Hippodrome and MJC's more than 220 Off-Track Betting (OTB) sites today to mark the start of a weeklong program of races capped by the P1-million PCSO Grand Championship Race on Sunday.

"More than the added incentive of a huge carryover amount in the Winner-Take-All, we believe that the quality and competitiveness of our race

cards would provide the thrill and excitement expected by our growing number of regular patrons," noted MJC president and chief executive lawyer Alfonso R. Reyno Jr.

Highlight of the six-day race program would be the running of the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) Grand Championship Race, a P1-million event exclusive to graduates of last year's PCSO Sweepstakes races.

The first of two championship races will feature 4-year-old and up Sweepstakes race veterans, including early favorite Staunch Ally, 2001 Champion 3-year-old Filly Sky Hawk, Sweepstakes Race winners Family Task and Holy King as well as Kitty

Hawk and Hostile Witness.

Four-year-old colt Staunch Ally, owned and bred by Marbo President Aristeo Puyat, shot to instant prominence recently following his surprise victory over champion galloper Wind Blown in the Philracom Commissioner's Cup at the San Lazaro Hippodrome.

The noted speedball is to be ridden by jockey Dominador H. Borbe Jr. for the 1,500-meter journey carrying top weight of 56 kg.

Winner of the featured race is set to receive a guaranteed purse of P600,000.00, while the three other placers are also assured of P200,000.00, P100,000.00 and P50,000.00 in prize money.

BLAST FROM THE PAST

TODAY in 1990, Frankie Miñoza tallied a five-under-par 283 to rule the \$200,000 Taiwan Open in Taipei. Also today, in 1990, Pasig beat Philab, 302, to win the 5th Pabal youth championship at the Rizal Memorial ballpark.

La Salle-Lipa stages Stallion Cup golfest

THE DE LA SALLE Lipa High School Batch '77 will stage the First Silver Stallion Cup Golf Tournament on April 12 at the Club Malarayat Golf and Country Club in Lipa City, Batangas.

All alumni and friends of De La Salle Lipa are invited in the event which stakes a four-stroke Aura Classic Kawasaki Scooter and a Dream Satellite TV

system as hole-in-one prizes.

For information, please call the De La Salle Lipa Batch '77 Secretariat at 7215049 and 7260673. Tournament organizers are expecting at least 300 guests and participants.

The tournament was created to put up the seed money for the Brother Jaime Hilario Learning

Community—the free night school department of De La Salle Lipa.

The event is sponsored by Smart Simply Amazing, Orient Day Spa, Mitsubishi Trium, Landtrade Properties and Management Inc. in cooperation with Petron BPI Mastercard, Sustagen Premium, SC Johnson and official radio station Magic 89.9.

Urban Hunt 2002 registration on

URBAN adventure buffs have until Friday to apply for a slot in one of three elimination dates of the Clorets Urban Hunt 2002.

Applicants may apply via the web at www.pfizer.com.ph or at email cloretsurbanhunt@yahoo.com.

Others may go directly to the AB Communications on the 20th floor of the Pacific Star Building, Makati Avenue corner Sen. GB Puyat Avenue, Makati City. Inquiries are also entertained at 3030780 or 303683.

Only 30 pairs will qualify for each of the three elimination dates set on April 27 and May 4 and 11. The top 10 from each of those qualifying runs will advance to the finals on May 25.

In the finals, the 30 qualifiers will vie for the top prize of P100,000. Second place is worth P25,000 and third P15,000.

Each team will be composed of two members regardless of gender as long as they are 18 or older.

Object of the Clorets Urban Hunt 2002 is for a team to seek Clorets packs stacked in strategic spots in Metro Manila and do challenging tasks. The participants will only be given a stipend of P250, which they are expected to use for fare and food.

They are not allowed to bring any communication equipment. Each team will be wards, who would record their every movement on video, and marshals who would handle their destinations.

How to get to these Clorets packs would depend on the participants' common sense, logic and knowledge of the quickest way to get to a particular area in the metropolis.

Dynamic Dy

THE BIG game fishing season opens in a few days (April 12-14) with the Amado Dy sponsored fishing tournament in San Vicente, Cagayan. For the serious big game angler, veterans and aspiring ones alike, all roads will lead to the PGFF Fishing Camp in Barangay Santa Ana where one finds the last kilometer post in the Northern Luzon highway system.

For these guys no distance is so great they will not find a way to get there. By plane to Tuguegarao as the first leg of the trip, then by land to San Vicente, or over ten hours by land, these are just means to an end—great fishing. For saulfish, maybe even a marlin or two, dorado, barracuda, jacks.

The PGFF maintains a number of outrigger bances at the camp for the members and guests, and there are more available from local fishermen. But don't be surprised if along the way you pass a 4x4 pulling a trailer with a Boston whaler or similar craft on it. That is surely one of the increasing number of anglers who like the convenience of fishing on their very own boats.

That San Vicente, Cagayan is the billfishing capital of the Philippines can no longer be denied. From personal experience we can say that the chances of landing a marlin in San Vicente are even better than Kona, Hawaii. And next only to the Great Barrier Reefs of Australia. My informal finding: one every five days in Kona; one every day in the Great Barrier Reefs, and one every three days in Cagayan. That is something tourism promotion officials might like to consider.

And now we would like to pay tribute to the sponsor of the forthcoming fishing tournament—Amado A. Dy.

Sportsman of the unquestionable caliber, Amado is a well-rounded angler who has fished with the best at some of the most prestigious fishing spots all over the world, including Asia, Hawaii and Australia. And yet he can also be seen in Calraya, or Calatagan, and even the hito pond of Nayong Pilipino casting a line, or simply enjoying the company of those who share his passion for the fishing sport.

We hope the present crop of anglers realize that there is no bigger patron of sport fishing today than Amado. He shows this in countless ways. But none more evident than during the annual year-end get together of anglers when he gives away half a dozen gift certificates of entry fees to any of the monthly PGFF tournaments—at the recipient's choice! As if that were not enough, he also sponsors participation in the annual Hawaiian International Billfish Tournament (HIBT) for whoever wins the PGFF Angler of the Year title.

With benefactors like Amado A. Dy around, we can all look forward to many, many happy fishing days.

COMMENTARY

By Vic Vic Villavicencio

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What Drives You

A chance to win up to P10 Million!


- Get a Scratcha Numba game card for a specified purchase of fuel, lubricants, LPG or Star Mart goodies.
- To win instant cash prizes, scratch off the 3 boxes on the scratch card and match with the weekly winning combinations.
- Or scratch off the raffle box in the same scratch card to reveal the cash prize you can win when you join the raffle draw.
- Win as much as P10 million in the June 30, 2002 grand draw!

Up to P45 Million at stake!

Hurry! Promo period is from March 15, 2002 to June 15, 2002.



Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0245 Series of 2002

What Drives You  CALTEX

SCRATCHA NUMBA

PROMO MECHANICS

1. Get a game card for every P300 single or accumulated receipt purchase of fuel; P100 single or accumulated receipt purchase of lubricants; P100 single receipt purchase at Star Mart; or P250 single receipt purchase of LPG.

2. There are two (2) ways to win cash prizes:

Instant Cash:

- a. Scratch off the 3 boxes on the scratch card to reveal the 3-digit number combination. Each digit is printed in words at the bottom.
- b. Match the 3-digit no. combination with the winning Caltex Scratcha Numba combination announced every Monday, Wednesday and Friday between March 18 & June 7, 2002 in the Philippine Daily Inquirer, Philippine Star and posted in all participating Caltex stations. The March 29 (Good Friday) announcement will be moved to March 31 (Easter Sunday). Announcements in local dailies will be made every Saturday within the same period, except on March 30 (Back Saturday).
- c. If the number combination on your game card matches any of the announced winning number combinations in exactly the same order (Ex. 018 does not match 081), you win exactly the cash equivalent of the 3-digit number printed on the card. (Ex. If your number combination is 999 you win P999 or if your number combination is 020 you win P20).

- d. Cash prizes can be claimed at participating Caltex stations from Monday to Friday, from 9:00 am – 5:00 pm, upon surrender of the winning game card.

- e. Game cards are subject to validation by the authorized Caltex station representative. Only winning cards with authenticated security code will be honored. Crumpled, defaced and torn game cards or those with scratched security code ("void if scratched" box) will be disqualified.

- f. Cash prizes must be claimed within 60 days from the end of the promo period. All unclaimed prizes will be forfeited in favor of Caltex (Philippines) Inc., with prior approval of DTI.

- g. Employees of Caltex (Philippines) Inc., participating Caltex stations, McCann-Erickson (Phil.), Inc., Caltex promotions agencies, suppliers, and all their relatives up to the 2nd degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified from joining the instant promo.

Raffle Draw:

- a. Scratch off the raffle box on the scratch card to reveal the cash prize you can win in the raffle. The amount printed on it should be any of the ff: P1 million, P5 million or P10 million only.
- b. Indicate/write your name, address, tel. no. and/or cell. no. on the raffle stub and sign it. Then drop it in drop boxes located at any of the participating Caltex stations.
- c. There will be one (1) raffle draw with (3) winners. If your raffle entry is drawn, you can win exactly the same amount indicated on your drawn winning raffle entry. You can win as much as P10 million only.
- d. A customer can win only once in the raffle draw. If a name is drawn more than once, the customer shall get the bigger prize.
- e. Last day of submission of raffle entries is on June 15, 2002 at 12:00 pm. The Raffle draw will be held on June 30, 2002. The venue and time shall be submitted to DTI and announced two (2) weeks before the draw.
- f. All winners will be notified through registered mail.
- g. Raffle prizes can be claimed upon presentation of two (2) proper identifications (e.g., driver's license, passport, etc.) and the notification letter.
- h. Raffle prizes can be claimed at 7/F 6750 Ayala Ave., 1226 Makati City, Philippines from Monday to Friday, 9:00 am to 5:00 pm only.

- i. Raffle prizes must be claimed within 60 days upon notification. All unclaimed prizes will be forfeited in favor of Caltex (Philippines) Inc., with prior approval of DTI.

- j. The 20% withholding tax on prizes worth P1,000,000.00 will be paid for by Caltex (Philippines) Inc. For prizes exceeding P1,000,000.00, the winner shall shoulder the 20% withholding tax.

- k. Employees of Caltex (Philippines) Inc., participating Caltex stations, McCann-Erickson (Phil.), Inc., Caltex promotions agencies, suppliers and all their relatives up to the 2nd degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified from joining the raffle promo.

3. Promo period is from March 15, 2002 to June 15, 2002.

* Approved by DTI-NCR.
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0245 Series of 2002.

2 RP boxers clash for gold

HELSINKI, Finland—Violito Payla and Harry Tanamor beat their respective opponents to arrange an All-Philippine title clash in the fly-weight division of the 21st Gee Bee International Amateur Boxing Championships here Saturday.

Payla crushed Finland's Pasi Silvenpoinen, 18-4, while Tanamor, a lightweight who had to climb one rung after his division was canceled, defeated Russian Andrei Bogdanov, 18-3, in the semifinals.

Featherweight Roel Laguna and lightweight Romeo Brin also made it to the finals, assuring the 6-man Philippine team of one gold, three silver and one bronze medals.

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Talk N Text seeks 8th win

SMB's Strothers, Bennett poised to get ax from Bernardino

Teams	W	L
Talk N Text	7	1
Purefoods	7	2
Coca-Cola	7	3
Red Bull	5	3
FedEx	5	4
Sta. Lucia	5	4
Hapee-RP	4	5
Alaska	4	5
San Miguel	4	5
Selecta-RP	3	7
Ginebra	2	7
Shell	1	8

GAME TODAY
(Cuneta Astrodome)
6 p.m.—Red Bull vs
Talk N Text

TALK N TEXT had been merciless in crushing the Alaska Aces to the tune of 84-67 during the weekend.

The Phone Pals are expected to duplicate that demolition job against Batang Red Bull tonight in the PBA Samsung Governors Cup at the Cuneta Astrodome.

If they succeed, it would be Talk N Text's eighth straight victory.

The Thunder are still feeling the jarring effects of back-to-back setbacks to San Miguel Beer and Coca-Cola, debacles that somehow diminished the 2001 Commissioner's Cup champions' esteem.

Meanwhile, San Miguel imports Lamont Strothers and Mario Bennett are expected to draw fines from Commissioner Jun Bernardino for shouting invectives and chiding game officials after Sunday's SMB-Sta. Lucia game. The Realtors won, 73-65.

Strothers felt he was fouled while driving for

the hoop with seven seconds left in the game.

They refused to calm down despite being slapped a technical foul each that delayed the outcome of the game for almost five minutes. Strothers and Bennett were later ushered out of the court.

The Beermen pricked Red Bull's pride with an 89-67 romp two weeks back before the Tigers routed the Thunder, 96-77, after a week-long holiday break.

Tony Lang, chief architect of Red Bull's Commissioner's Cup crown, had a disappointing debut for the Thunder as he was totally outplayed by former teammate Ron Hale during their match against the Tigers.

In contrast, the Phone Pals are enjoying a winning spree, beating their last seven opponents in convincing fashion.

The Phone Pals own a pair of lethal imports in Gerald Honeycutt and Richie Primm.



STROTHERS: Disrespect for referees.

FILE PHOTO

Pak, Goosen prevail

LOS ANGELES—Se Ri Pak, who says she wants to be on the same level with Annika Sorenstam, was one shot better than the LPGA's dominant player. Pak, a 24-year-old player from South Korea, beat Sorenstam to win the Office Depot Championship on Sunday, denying the 31-year-old Swede her second comeback victory in a row in the tournament. In Duluth, Georgia, Retief Goosen won the BellSouth Classic, a dismal start to put away Phil Mickelson of the United States and claim a four-stroke victory over Sweden's Jesper Parnevik. Goosen closed with a 2 under-par 70 in difficult conditions on the TPC at Sugarloaf, finishing at 16-under 272. Parnevik, who posted 65 early in the day for a 276, wasn't even around when the winner finished.

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Peeved over pet, man shot dead

RENATO Carillo, 45, was reportedly drunk when he yelled at his wife to keep their dog in a cage so it wouldn't bite anyone in Las Piñas City late Sunday night. The couple's noisy quarrel and the dog's barking annoyed neighbor Jose Rey, 39, who shot Carillo in the right arm and the left side of the body. PO1 Eduardo Dorra arrested Rey.

Christian V. Esguerra

METRO

Editor Louie C. Camino

Color-coding for buses on Edsa

Decline noted in number of passengers; Manila to phase out pedicabs

By Alcuin Papa
and Jerome Aning

HAPPY days might soon be over for public utility air-conditioned buses plying Edsa as the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority announced yesterday that it might reimpose the color-coding scheme on these buses to reduce the number of rush-hour vehicles on the Caloocan-to-Pasay road.

MMDA Chair Benjamin Abalos yesterday said he had noticed a decline in the number of commuters riding air-conditioned buses along Edsa during rush hours. He said he would meet with the bus owners and "give them the option to recall some of their vehicles during the rush hour."

If the owners would not be agreeable to this, the MMDA would no longer exempt their buses from the agency's color-coding scheme, according to Abalos.

"If they would not agree, then I think it is high time to reconsider color-coding for buses," Abalos said.

He said the unregulated operation of pedicabs also causes traffic congestion not only in Manila but also in many other parts of the metropolis.

A few years ago, the Unified Vehicle Volume Reduction Program, more popularly known as the "color-coding" scheme, covered buses. But the MMDA lifted the ban to accommodate the large number of bus riders.

But with the opening of the Metro Rail Transit on Edsa, the number of bus commuters has considerably decreased.

"During rush hour, I see that

most of the buses plying Edsa are not full so let's see if we can reduce the volume of vehicles this way (through color-coding)," Abalos said.

In Manila, the days of pedicabs may also be numbered. The city government will soon be phasing them out even as it looks for an alternative source of income for the drivers and operators that will be displaced by the move.

"Driving a pedicab is very dangerous not only for the driver but (also) for the passenger," Manila Mayor Lito Atienza said in the city government's monthly publica-

tion "Maynila Ngayon."

He also said driving a pedicab for a living is "not humane and indicates social disparity."

Atienza noted that rickshaws—carriages pulled by humans—had long been phased out in China after the ruling communist party considered the practice as inhuman.

But Atienza said he understands pedicabs could not be immediately banned until City Hall finds an alternative employment for the drivers and operators.

He said he has assigned a team from the Pamantasang ng Lungsod ng Maynila to conduct a

study of the phaseout plan and to look for alternative livelihood for those who would be affected.

Hundreds of pedicabs ply many of Manila's streets, especially those not serviced by bigger public vehicles.

Atienza has ordered the compulsory registration of all pedicabs in Manila. He said the drivers would be asked to undergo a seminar on traffic rules and road courtesy before they would be given permits to ply their routes.

He said pedicab drivers should also follow ordinances that regulate their movements.

Teacher's rapist sentenced to 40 years in prison

By Christian V. Esguerra

A PASAY City court has sentenced a man to as long as 40 years in prison for robbing and raping a teacher under a bridge in the city two years ago.

Judge Porfirio Macaraeg found Francis Malabanan guilty of the special complex crime of robbery with rape and ordered him to pay the woman P105,000 in damages.

The woman, a teacher in Makati City, was waiting for a service shuttle in Villamor at about 5 a.m. on Feb. 11, 2000 when Malabanan and an unidentified companion approached her and took her jewelry and other personal belongings at knife point, according to the 10-page decision of Judge Macaraeg.

The two men then dragged the woman toward the side of the road just beneath a bridge where they took turns in raping her, court records showed.

The woman managed to escape after she kicked the knife out of Malabanan's hand, and she ran for help. Malabanan's companion is still at large.



Teenagers cool down with a water hose on a street in Las Piñas City, while the temperature continues to shoot up as the usual summer water crisis threatens the metropolis. Authorities warn that the water crisis will peak in three years' time.

Pasay fears Naia transmission lines despite assurance

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE NINOY Aquino International Airport Terminal 3 might have a "dark" future if the Manila Electric Co. fails to convince Pasay City residents that the construction of transmission lines in Villamor would not jeopardize their safety.

If the residents are not convinced, the controversial airport project might have no electricity when it opens in December.

The Pasay government has asked Meralco to secure a new environmental compliance certificate (ECC) for the construction of transmission lines on the densely populated 12th Street in Barangay Villamor, said Councilor Allan Panaligan, head of the city council's committees on engineering and public works and on patrimony, land use and zoning.

Panaligan said the transmission lines are a key part of the Naia project since 60 percent of the project's 115-kilovolt capacity would supply electricity to the new terminal.

"Without them (transmission lines), how will the terminal operate?" Panaligan told the Inquirer in a telephone interview.

But before the DENR could grant an ECC, the giant electric firm would first have to convince hundreds of protesting Villamor residents that the transmission cables were not a health hazard.

In a public hearing last Saturday, Panaligan said Villamor barangay chair Rey Gubatan had already told Meralco and airport officials that the residents would not approve the electric project. In the same hearing, a health department official said there was no concrete proof that the transmission lines posed a health hazard, Panaligan said.

He said the residents feared the electromagnetic field from the lines could cause health problems such as cancer.

Meralco previously secured an ECC for the construction of transmission lines on Sales Street in Villamor, but the Philippine Air Force opposed the project since it would supposedly be dangerous to helicopters taking off and landing in its headquarters, he said.

Canadian visitor robbed by friendly cross-dresser

CANADIAN tourist Joseph Thomas Jones, 64, was strolling in the tourist belt in Ermita, Manila Sunday night when a woman befriended him. At least she looked like a woman, he said.

Jones said that when the stranger started talking, he realized that "she" was a gay man dressed as a woman. Before the foreigner could protest, the cross-dresser grabbed P1,500 in cash from his pant pocket and fled, he said.

Jones, a retired fireman from British Columbia who was staying at the Paragon Tower on Flores Street in Ermita, said he was not able to run after the gay suspect, according to SPO1 Jacinto A. Amor of the Western Police District General Assignment Section.

Philip C. Tuleza

Reporter loses P10,000 to 'Salisi Gang'

By Philip C. Tuleza

A MANILA Standard reporter lost nearly P10,000 to a suspected "Salisi Gang" member while the reporter was eating at a Jollibee outlet in Ermita, Manila.

The fast-food shop is just in front of the National Bureau of Investigation and within walking distance of the Ermita police station and the Western Police District headquarters, both on UN Avenue.

The Ermita police car that was supposed to accompany the victim, Evelyn Z. Macairan, to look for the culprit arrived at the WPD headquarters 45 minutes after she reported the incident.

Macairan said she lost her green bag while she was eating in the fast-food shop at about 6:45 p.m. Sunday.

She said she lost her brother's 3210 Nokia phone worth P4,000; P1,000 in cash, a P3,500 tape recorder, important documents, ATM cards, and diskettes.

Macairan said she and Philippine Star reporters Cecile Suerte-Felipe and Shiela Crisostomo were supposed to attend the wake of the father of Newsbreak reporter Aries Rafo but they decided to have dinner first.

Macairan said that while she was eating, she realized that her bag was missing.

She said there was no security guard at the restaurant when she lost her bag.

"It was only when we returned with the policemen that I saw a security guard," she said.

Macairan and the two other reporters went to the WPD headquarters to report the loss.

They were supposed to board a patrol car of the Ermita police station to look around in the vicinity of the food outlet. But they said they had to wait for 45 minutes before the car arrived. Police said their car had a flat tire.

MMDA keeps hands off Navotas landfill issue

By Alcuin Papa

THE METROPOLITAN Manila Development Authority is keeping its hands off the controversial multimillion-peso garbage facility in Navotas, whose residents are protesting the project.

MMDA Chair Benjamin Abalos said in a telephone interview that he is leaving the issue to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

He said the Navotas project would have to pass the scrutiny of the DENR before it is issued an environmental compliance certificate (ECC).

"If the DENR says it's safe, then who are we to prevent the construction of the facility," Abalos explained.

He said the proponents of the facility already submitted an environmental impact study. According to the findings, the facility would be environmentally sound and safe, he said.

Navotas Mayor Toby Tiangco said the project is covered by Republic Act No. 9003, which allows local government units to use "controlled disposal facilities" for a period of five years from the effectivity of the law.

Navotas residents, mostly fishpond owners backed by leftist groups, have said the facility would poison the Navotas waters and eventually kill the local fishing industry.

Abalos said the residents "will have all the chance to air their protest before the DENR."

Navotas Mayor Tobias Tiangco had said the facility, which would begin op-

eration later this month, would be safe for the environment.

In cooperation with the Manila city government, Navotas is converting a 10-hectare fishpond in Barangay Tanza into a "controlled garbage facility" to accommodate 2,000 tons of garbage daily.

Tiangco's office emphasized that the facility would accommodate only garbage from Navotas and from Manila's transfer station at Pier 18.

Navotas resident Salvador Monroy said he and other residents fear the garbage might spill into Manila Bay while being transported by barges.

Monroy said he filed a formal complaint with the local government, saying that "ecology-wise," it would not be advisable to turn a fishpond into a garbage facility. He warned that garbage might overflow from the former fishpond during the rainy season.

Tiangco stressed that no garbage would fall off the barges and there would be no leak at the facility.

Natural impermeable clay walls will protect the controlled disposal facility, according to the mayor.

These walls, together with other protective barriers, will prevent leakage.

The facility is 3.7 kilometers from the nearest residential area in Tanza, Tiangco pointed out.

"Those who are opposing it do not base their arguments on technical or scientific grounds," he said in a statement yesterday. "I am sure that they are being used as pawns by people who have a political stake in this issue."

He noted that the protesting groups could not present any alternative to the project. "If they have a better idea, then they should come out with it," he said in his statement.

He said that with the Tanza facility, the town would be able to save at least P30 million per year, since it would not need the services of a contractor to haul garbage from the present transfer station on C4 Road and R10 to its final destination.

The savings would be used to fund municipal development projects, Tiangco said.

He said he would close the transfer station and replace it with the Tanza facility, "which is not along a main road, not in a prime location, is four kilometers from the nearest residential area and is in accordance with the law."

The mayor's statement explained that a buffer zone and a litter fence would be built so that the garbage is properly contained.

The waste will be sprayed with organic enzymes so it does not smell. A six-inch soil cover applied daily will be another safety protection against the stench as well as against scavenging birds and animals at the disposal site, he said.

In a media forum last week, a group of Tanza residents asked the MMDA and the DENR to stop Philippine Ecology Systems Corp. (Phileco) from transporting trash to the Navotas facility.

The militant group Pamalakaya and Bayan Muna-Navotas chapter joined the residents in asking the MMDA and the DENR to recall the permit issued by the municipal government to Phileco.

One of the forum speakers, Romy Hidalgo, said the trash to be hauled from Pier 18 was the same garbage "turned away" from Semirara Island last year. With a report from Volt Contreras

Foul play suspected in trader's death

By Alcuin Papa

INVESTIGATORS suspect foul play in the death of a Makati businessman who was found dead in his condominium unit Sunday night.

The victim was identified as Alberto Ruiz de la Rama, 38, single, of the Makati

Prime City Condominium in San Antonio Village, Makati City.

Investigator SPO3 Rio Bucalan of the Makati City Police Criminal Investigation Division said a relative found De la Rama's body at about 11 p.m.

The victim had two gunshot wounds in the left side of the chest from his own 45

caliber pistol, police said.

They said the case could not be a simple suicide. An investigator said suicides usually inflict a single gunshot wound, not two, on themselves. Most suicides also point the gun to the head instead of the chest area, other investigators said. De la Rama's relatives have yet to be questioned by police.

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- 8 E.T.
- 9 TIME MACHINE
- 10 EVIL WOMAN

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- 2 WE WERE SOLDIERS
- 3 NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
- 4 E.T.
- 5 13 GHOSTS
- 6 GOT 2 BELIEVE
- 7 HARI NG SELDA
- 8 ICE AGE

CITY ILOILO

- 1 GOT 2 BELIEVE
- 2 CLOSED
- 3 ICE AGE
- 4 HARI NG SELDA
- 5 WE WERE SOLDIERS
- 6 E.T.
- 7 CLOSED
- 8 NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE

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- 2 E.T.
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- 4 ITLOG
- 5 CROSS ROADS
- 6 HARI NG SELDA

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- 7 ICE AGE
- 8 EVIL WOMAN

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- 4 TIME MACHINE
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Gotesco Ortigas

- 1 HARI NG SELDA
- 2 BLADE 2
- 3 ICE AGE
- 4 ITLOG
- 5 E.T.

Universal

- 1 HARI NG SELDA
- 2 BLADE 2
- 3 ITLOG

Sampaguita

- 1 HARI NG SELDA
- 2 BLADE 2
- 3 ITLOG
- 4 E.T.

Dilson

- 1 TEMPRESS
- 2 LOD SA JAMAN
- 3 RESERVE

Manditong

- 1 HARI NG SELDA
- 2 BLADE 2
- 3 ITLOG

Prima

- 1 HARI NG SELDA
- 2 BLADE 2
- 3 ITLOG

Setang Cinema Complex Repto SUPER CINERAMA

- 1 BLADE 2
- 2 TIME MACHINE
- 3 ITLOG
- 4 HARI NG SELDA
- 5 ICE AGE

New Divisoria Mall DIVISORIA CINEMA

- 1 HARI NG SELDA
- 2 BLADE 2
- 3 ITLOG

CINEMA 2000

- 1 HARI NG SELDA
- 2 RESERVE
- 3 COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO
- 4 EVIL WOMAN
- 5 ITLOG
- 6 E.T.
- 7 TIME MACHINE
- 8 BLADE 2

Cinema 2000 Waltermart

- 1 HARI NG SELDA
- 2 COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO
- 3 TIME MACHINE
- 4 E.T.

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall

- 1 HARI NG SELDA
- 2 TIME MACHINE
- 3 E.T.
- 4 COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix

- 1 HARI NG SELDA
- 2 BANDITS
- 3 SOON TO OPEN
- 4 SOON TO OPEN

Cinema 2000 MetroTown

- 1 GOT 2 BELIEVE
- 2 HARI NG SELDA
- 3 D-TOX
- 4 QUEEN OF THE DAMNED

Llanas Cinema

- 1 HARI NG SELDA
- 2 TIME MACHINE
- 3 ITLOG
- 4 BLADE 2

Llanas MovieCity

- 1 HARI NG SELDA
- 2 TIME MACHINE
- 3 ICE AGE
- 4 ITLOG
- 5 E.T.

Olivarez Tri-Cinema

- 1 HARI NG SELDA
- 2 E.T.
- 3 TIME MACHINE

Olivarez Los Baños

- 1 HARI NG SELDA
- 2 COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO
- 3 OLIVAREZ TAGAYtay
- 4 ICE AGE
- 5 EVA
- 6 GOT 2 BELIEVE

Morales Cinema

- 1 HARI NG SELDA
- 2 ICE AGE
- 3 RESERVE

Cabuyao

- 1 HARI NG SELDA
- 2 ITLOG

Fourstep

- 1 RESERVE

Emperor

- 1 BIRINGKA
- 2 BANDITS
- 3 HARI NG SELDA

Fiesta World Mall

- 1 ICE AGE
- 2 WE WERE SOLDIERS
- 3 D-TOX
- 4 HARI NG SELDA

Jade Cinema

- 1 ICE AGE
- 2 HARI NG SELDA
- 3 E.T.
- 4 TIME MACHINE

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THX

- 1 TIME MACHINE
- 2 E.T.
- 3 ICE AGE
- 4 BLADE 2
- 5 CROSS ROADS
- 6 COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO
- 7 HARI NG SELDA
- 8 JOHN Q
- 9 EVIL WOMAN
- 10 ITLOG

Ermita

- 1 BLADE 2
- 2 E.T.
- 3 HARI NG SELDA
- 4 EVIL WOMAN
- 5 CROSS ROADS
- 6 THE ARK
- 7 TIME MACHINE

Metro East

- 1 COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO
- 2 ICE AGE
- 3 CROSS ROADS
- 4 E.T.
- 5 BLADE 2
- 6 HARI NG SELDA
- 7 TIME MACHINE
- 8 EVIL WOMAN

Novaliches

- 1 E.T.
- 2 ICE AGE
- 3 EVIL WOMAN
- 4 GOT 2 BELIEVE
- 5 BLADE 2
- 6 CROSS ROADS
- 7 TIME MACHINE
- 8 HARI NG SELDA

Imus

- 1 HARI NG SELDA
- 2 ICE AGE
- 3 ICE AGE
- 4 ITLOG
- 5 E.T.
- 6 EVIL WOMAN

Bacolod

- 1 WE WERE SOLDIERS
- 2 QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
- 3 JIMMY NEUTRON
- 4 D-TOX
- 5 NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
- 6 RAT RACE

Iloilo

- 1 WE WERE SOLDIERS
- 2 ICE AGE
- 3 BLADE 2
- 4 HARI NG SELDA
- 5 EVA
- 6 E.T.

Star Mills

- 1 ICE AGE
- 2 TIME MACHINE
- 3 E.T.
- 4 ITLOG
- 5 CROSS ROADS
- 6 CROSS ROADS

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NBN 4 to launch talent search program next month

KOREAN music executive David Shim, president and chief executive officer of Westwood Media in Korea, was in Manila recently to close a co-production deal with local promoter Mark Rozes and the National Broadcasting Network (NBN) for "Dream Search," a talent search program that NBN will launch in May.

"We're all excited about this tie-up with David Shim's search that aims to support and promote the Filipino musical artists in the regional and international market," said NBN president and chair Mia Condo. "I'm particularly impressed with his enthusiasm for the Filipino talent."

Likewise, Shim is optimistic about the venture. "Filipinos are very talented and you have a lot of advantages over other music artists in the region," noted Shim. "This is the primary reason we are bringing 'Dream Search' to the Philippines."

According to NBN network manager Joey Isabela, "Dream Search" is the talent search program that local singers may have been waiting for. At stake is the chance to sign a recording contract with an international label.

Shim was formerly president of RMI Korea and Warner Music Korea. He is also associated

with DreamWorks SKG in Hollywood, the company that Steven Spielberg formed along with Jeffrey Katzenberg and David Geffen in 1995.

In a recent interview with Shim during his visit to the NBN Studios, the Korean businessman explained that the search for new talents is an ongoing process in the music business.

"Discovering raw talent is like finding a precious gem," he said. "But it is the process of polishing the gem that is important, so that eventually it becomes a beautiful diamond or ruby."

That's all part of the production, the responsibility of the music company to mold these raw talents to become international recording artists."

Inspired by the popular "Star Search" in the US, "Dream Search" started in Korea last year.

Shim started his own talent search program in Korea last year. Similar programs in Japan and Hong Kong followed shortly. Negotiations are now underway in Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur and Singapore.

"The Asian market has become very impor-

tant to the music industry," explained Shim. "Somewhere out there is the future Michael Jackson or Madonna or Britney Spears and all we need to do is find him or her. This is what DreamSearch will do for us."

"Dream Search" is among the new programs that NBN will launch this quarter, including the MBA 2002 Season, PBL 2002 Season, "Eskwela ng Bayan" and the debate program, "Panindigan Mo sa Plaza Miranda."



SHIM

Too much ...

From page A22

may have her mistakes but loving Rico wasn't one of them. And I'm sure that even Rico would not want all their happy memories to go to waste.

If there's anything to be learned from the abrupt and sorry ending of their love affair, it's that even if we walk away from love, when we still have it within us, that love will just keep haunting us.

Only Rico and Claudine really know. For feedback, e-mail luludg@hotmail.com, friends_at_square@yahoo.com, wateringhole2000@yahoo.com

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101

ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	CROSS ROAD
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	HARI NG SELDA
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DOLBY)	BLADE 2
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (DOLBY)	TIME MACHINE
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DOLBY)	ICE AGE
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7 (DOLBY)	E.T.
FARMERS PLAZA-1 (DOLBY)	EVIL WOMAN
FARMERS PLAZA-2 (DOLBY)	BLADE 2
FIESTA CARNIVAL	
NEW FRONTIER	

MANILA

EASTERN	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	HUBOG / TOO MUCH FLESH
ODEON	HARI NG SELDA
ODEON-2	TIME MACHINE
ROBIN	IT LOG
TANDEM-1	SEX MEDUSA
TANDEM-2	SEX EDUCATION
TIMES	HARRY POTTER / PHOSSED

QUEZON CITY

ACT-1	SENSUAL SLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERD MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	ORIGINAL SIN
QUEZON-1	IT LOG
REMAR	HARI NG SELDA
REMAR-2	IT LOG

NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA

A	HARI NG SELDA
B	IT LOG
C	GOT 2 BELIEVE

MANDALUYONG CITY

SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-61 TO 78
CINEMA-1	ICE AGE
CINEMA-2	E.T.

CAINTA RIZAL

STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	HARI NG SELDA
CINEMA-2	BLADE 2
CINEMA-3	IT LOG
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	EVIL WOMAN
CINEMA-5 (DOLBY)	HARI NG SELDA
CINEMA-6	GOT 2 BELIEVE
CINEMA-7	ICE AGE
CINEMA-8	QUEEN OF DAMNED
CINEMA-9 (DOLBY)	E.T.
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	BLADE 2
CINEMA-11 (DOLBY)	ICE AGE
CINEMA-12	CROSS ROADS
CINEMA-14	TIME MACHINE
CINEMA-15	COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO

LORES

CINEMA 2	CLOSED
CINEMA-3	CLOSED

POWER PLANT CINEMA

CINEMA-1	CROSS ROAD
CINEMA-2	E.T.
CINEMA-3	BLADE 2
CINEMA-4	COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO
CINEMA-5	EVIL WOMAN
CINEMA-6	ICE AGE

UNIWIDE METROMALL

(LAS PINAS)	
CINEMA-1	
CINEMA-2	
CINEMA-4	

UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL

(PARANAQUE)	
CINEMA-1	AL PIN NG TUKGO
CINEMA-2	THE OTHER SIDE OF LOVE
CINEMA-4	ALAMOD

ANG PAMBANSANG THEME SONG NGAYON PELIKULA NA!

SAIBAKUTA

ANDREW E.

BLAKDYAK

ANGELIKA DELA CRUZ

MAUI TAYLOR



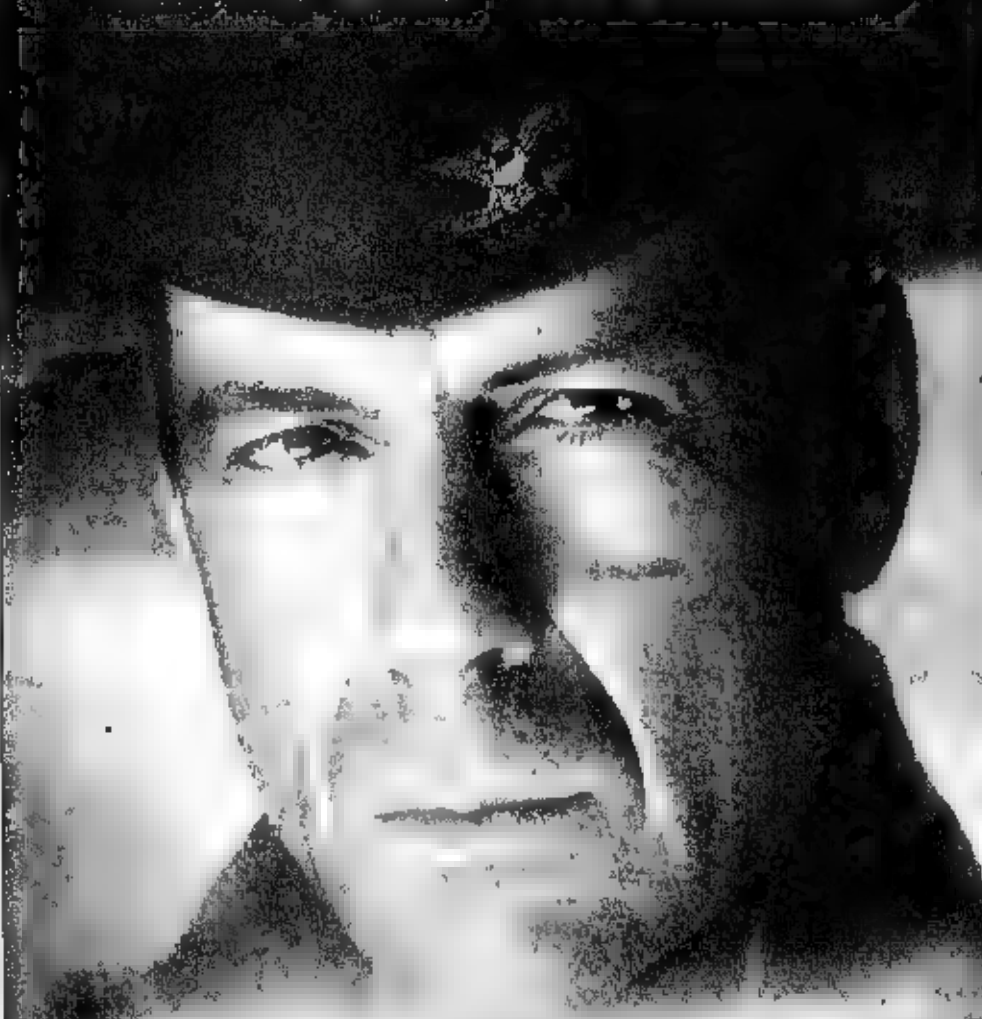
KRISTINE JAKA MICHAEL FLORES

DIRECTED BY AL TANTAY

OPENS TOMORROW!

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BRUCE WILLIS



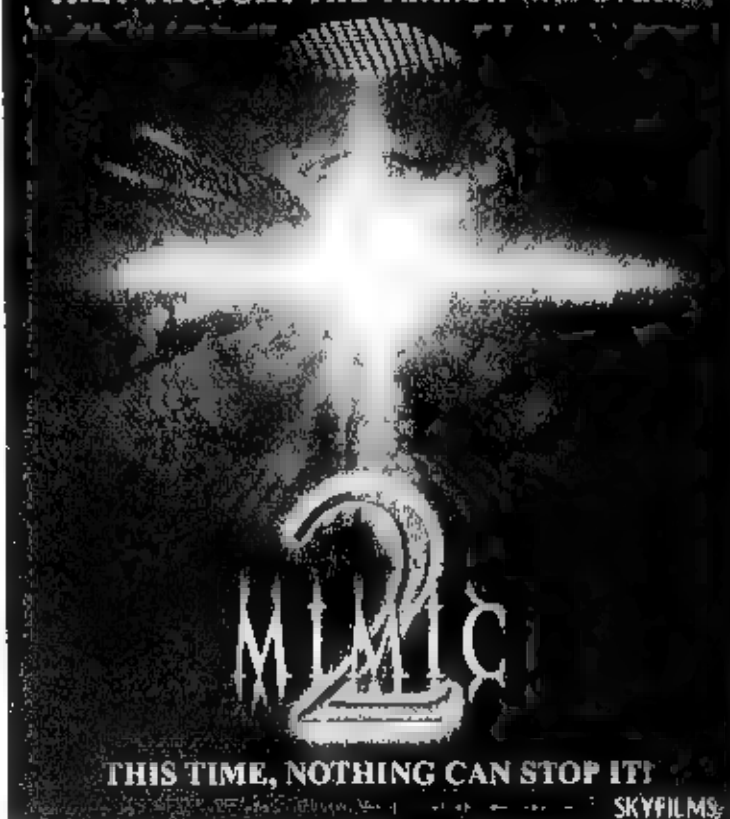
HART'S WAR



OPENS TOMORROW!

OPENS TOMORROW!

THEY THOUGHT THE TERROR WAS OVER.



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3-TAON NABILIBID

NGAYON, MAY KWENTONG IHAHATID!

ANGELIKA DELA CRUZ

ROBIN PADILLA



OPENS APRIL 10!

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EDDIE MURPHY ROBERT DENIRO



Editor Louie C. Camling

VIEWFINDER



Nestor U. Torre

How's Foster as an actress? She looks cool and professional, but she makes it

Best movies on Cinemax

Monday, April 15 at 7.30 p.m., "Against Their Will." Tuesday, April 16 at 5.45 p.m., "Scrooged." Wednesday, April 17 at 9 p.m., "The Warden."

**New shows, seasons
on Studio 23**

Wednesday, April 3, Studio 23 premiered "Baywatch Hawaii" at 8 p.m. The show's new, up-and-coming stars include **Brooke Burns**, **Michael Bergin**, **Jason Brooks**, **Stacy Lee Kamano** and **Jason Mamoa**.

Feedback

MONTHS ago, we bumped into Amy Austria at a theater and she came over to ask if we'd gotten her e-mail regarding our piece on her in "Bagong

Thanks, ladies—we assure you, you deserve every word of praise in those articles!

Text your choice of movie

On April 16, "Luv Txt" stars Judy Ann Santos, Wowle de Guzman and Russell C. Mon, under the direction of Rowell Santiago. "Kahit Isang Saglit" also stars Judy Ann, this time with Piojo Pascual and Leandro Muñoz. And "Radio Romance" has an ensemble cast headed by Rico Yan and Claudine Barretto.

Which film is your choice for screening on Cinema One? Watch out for the My Movie Special plugs airing on the channel.

DOLLYWOOD



*Dolly Anne
Carvalho*

"But you didn't," —Anonymous

Let's not pass judgment on Claudine, Sh

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MPAA RATING PG-13

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Jim Caviezel **Alfred Molina**

Directed by
Tommy Harper

Prince of Thieves

The Count of Monte Cristo

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Gov't disputes lobby group's claims vs RP anti-piracy drive

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

AMERICAN companies may be losing \$120 million yearly from bootleggers of software, movie, music and book in the Philippines but this is only a pittance compared to the \$2.6 billion annual losses they incur from copyright infringement in the United States.

This was stressed by Intellectual Property Office director general Emma C. Francisco who has disputed the American lobby group International Intellectual Property Alliance's latest attempt to belittle the Philippine government's efforts in protecting copyrights, patents and other intellectual property rights (IPR).

Francisco said: "The Philippines is willing to learn from the best practices that the US will adopt to address the \$2.6 billion

losses incurred by copyright industries in the US." The US accounts for nearly a quarter of the estimated \$12 billion in losses from IPR violations worldwide.

Francisco said the IPO would counter the IIPA's claims that there was no concerted government effort against intellectual property violations in the Philippines during the US-Philippines Trade and Investment Council Meeting in Manila today.

Francisco said the "three branches of government have joined hands to combat piracy and protect intellectual property owners."

She said Congress has ratified several bills that would strengthen the country's rules against pirates with a number of related bills still in the pipeline. She said the Supreme Court has designated seven regional trial

courts as special intellectual property courts to hasten the resolution of IPR cases. She said the executive branch was relentlessly pursuing violators through various enforcement agencies.

The IIPA, a group of seven trade associations composed of 1,450 US copyright-based companies, successfully convinced the US Trade Representative to nudge the Philippines from the ordinary to the priority watchlist of the world's worst IPR violators in its Special 301 report.

During a visit to the Philippines last year, US Department of Commerce Assistant Secretary William Lash II said the United States was not satisfied with the Philippines' efforts to curb the rampant violation of intellectual property rights which he said has robbed American companies of \$200 million in losses last year.

Lash said it was not enough that the country has rules outlawing illegal copying of patented works, the government should be

able to prosecute, penalize or jail those who violate the law. "Promises made should be promises kept," Lash said.

But Francisco countered that the IIPA wanted to use the government as one huge collecting agent for intellectual property owners that file cases but who abandon the same when they have reached settlement agreements with violators. This is why criminal cases involving IPR violations have been settled without the knowledge of prosecution and enforcement agencies who discover that a settlement has been made only when the complainants do not appear during the course of the investigation.

The IPO maintained that the country has one of the lowest incidence of piracy in Asean and that the IIPA itself acknowledged that the bootlegged copies were coming from the country's neighbors such as Malaysia and Taiwan.

Lights, camera, auction

ONE reader sent me a message over the cell phone recently. Let's see you, Adong Banal, the reader politely told me, solve this problem, over. I'm not sure if he or she likes me!

It goes: "Suppose Casino Filipino raises its income by P3.5 billion. Is it okay for the Department of Trade and Industry to stop the auction of heavy equipment? Explain."

It's a tough one, admittedly. In the first place, I'm not sure Casino Filipino uses much heavy equipment. I suspect it needs armored trucks for hauling that kind of money.

I only know the DTI's Bureau of Import Services, or BIS, in effect, forced a stop to public auctions of heavy equipment. It is not issuing import permits anymore.

So says Dominic Sytin. He owns and runs the company United Auctioneer in Valenzuela. It is a pioneer in the "unreserved" public auction of heavy equipment here.

United Auctioneer is one of the targets of the DTI, which makes Japanese and American car assemblers here happy, by putting guys like Sytin out of business.

OVER the greater radio program Barangay 1026 on Angel Radio, Sytin said the Bureau of Customs no longer accepts payments of duties and taxes for imported used vehicles.

Apparently, the DTI does not respect the opinion of the Office of the President, Department of Justice and the Office of the Government Corporate Counsel.

All of them said the importation of used vehicles in Subic is legal. It is contrary to the DTI position. Precisely, the DTI tried to stop the importation by declaring it illegal.

It's where the BIS is useful. To accept payment for duties and taxes, the customs bureau requires those BIS import permits. Today, the BIS is just not issuing any.

For no reason at all, basta, all of a sudden, this BIS can deny anybody an import permit for used vehicles, and the BIS can even claim it is just doing its job.

Under the rules of the BIS, importation of any used vehicles is prohibited. Except perhaps, well, kariton. The rules were written during the time of Limahong.

SO WHY did the BIS allow the importation of used vehicles if it was against the rules? Simple. At that time, Japanese and American car assemblers did not yet grumble.

But they are now grumbling about the importation of used SUVs and passenger vans. They are saying they are losing business to the imported used vehicles.

Actually, Japanese and American car assemblers also import SUVs as completely built-up units. Only, they are brand-new and, thus, they are expensive.

Of course they say it's all because they pay too much taxes for the brand-new SUVs. The imported secondhand SUVs are much cheaper because of lower taxes.

But word going around indicates that Japanese and American car assemblers here also, er, "save" a lot in their tax payments for imported brand-new SUVs.

If that's true, the DTI is only favoring the car companies in their own business of importation. The DTI only wants them to make the money, and not guys like Sytin. Aray!

SAY what you will about the imported secondhand SUVs and passenger vans, but I don't think we must stop the public auction of used heavy equipment.

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III



In the auction, you don't see lights or cameras, and it's just all action. No drama, no minimum price. Thus, buyers always have the chance to get items they can afford.

Prices can go down considerably. The auction, in effect, does away with the mark-ups of middlemen. All those layers of mark-ups can reach 50 percent of the price.

To think, guys like Sytin sell the imported used heavy equipment mostly to local government units and private contractors, which are also doing work for the government.

The actual problem is the imported used SUVs and vans. They're too cheap. They compete with similarly imported brand-new SUVs and vans of car companies.

But the DTI must please these companies. To do that, it seems the BIS is willing to sacrifice the business for used heavy equipment. I think something is wrong.

NOW, I heard that Ephraim Genuino, chair of Pagcor, owner of Casino Filipino, wants to raise the company's income by another P500 to P600 million a month.

Maybe that's why the DTI thinks it's all right to do away with cheap used trucks and heavy equipment, by stopping their importation. There's Casino Filipino, anyway.

Most likely Genuino will hit his target, I heard that he already stopped the practice of Casino Filipino's honoring checks.

Big-time players of course, complained that they had to carry around millions of cash. Genuino reportedly told them that Casino Filipino does not need their millions.

Moderation is the buzzword at the Casino Filipino nowadays. Word is going around that Casino Filipino recently banned a big-time player from any of its casinos.

Word is, the poor guy got so hooked on gaming that he already sold the ancestral home in Forbes Park. As a policy, Casino Filipino does not want such players.

THEY may give Pagcor more income, actually, but Genuino probably thinks that the backlash can even be more costly. The main criticism against Pagcor is the so-called social cost of operating casinos. People can lose their pants—plus their underwear.

Thus, Genuino decided that Casino Filipino should no longer honor checks. Initially, his executives thought it would slash Pagcor's income. It worked the other way.

Pagcor's biggest income drain when Genuino became chair was its mountains of receivables. Yes, those checks! They were always eventually written off.

So if Genuino hits his target to raise Pagcor's income by another P3.5 billion this year, its total income can reach roughly P17 to 18 billion.

Now a proposed bill in Congress calls for Pagcor to set aside one percent of its income for livelihood projects in the poorest barangays. That's about P175 to P180 million.

That may be something, but I don't think it's enough. I think we still need to create other job opportunities. Like those coming from those buyers of secondhand trucks and heavy equipment.

German lender imposes stiff terms on PLDT loan

By Doris C. Dumlaog and Abigail L. Ho

GERMAN bilateral lender Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW) has imposed four stiff conditions for the disbursement of the bulk of the \$149-million loan it earlier committed to local telecommunications giant Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co.

Industry sources told the Inquirer that the German development bank, which has so far released only \$8 million of the approved loan, informed PLDT that the disbursement of the remaining amount would depend on the infusion of fresh funds into the telecom firm.

Among the four conditions sought by KfW, the sources said, was the completion of the sale of a minority stake in mobile phone subsidiary Smart Communications Inc. by the first semester of this year.

The other conditions imposed were:

- The release of a \$100-million loan sought by PLDT from Japan Bank for International Cooperation;
- The implementation of a \$350-million PLDT bond float by Dec. 31, and,
- To raise at least \$350 million from the sale of the minority stake in Smart or a bond float.

The credit line approved by KfW was scheduled for disbursement within three years.

In a special board meeting in late

March when the matter was discussed, the sources said PLDT had agreed to negotiate with KfW for the reconsideration of the stiff conditions and to push for the release of some of the funds by the end of the year.

The sources said PLDT president Manuel Pangilinan had consulted to obtain the \$100-million JBIC loan by the first half of the year.

They also said Pangilinan believed it was feasible to put in place a bond float by the end of the year but at a lower offering size of \$250 million.

In a separate interview, a PLDT official said it was "not unusual" for creditors like KfW to give inputs on how to conduct its debt management initiatives.

"The KfW loan is but a component of that. The other components have to be in place also," the official said.

"KfW gave us an extension. It agreed to move some of the milestone dates and KfW approved to move at least one of those," the official noted.

Being a development bank, the PLDT official said the KfW also has some political components but the conditions being imposed were "not onerous."

The official said PLDT's debt management initiatives were running smoothly and the demands of creditors like KfW were not unreasonable.



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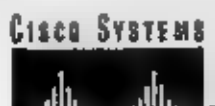
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Banks' NPLs still rising

By Elena R. Torrijos

DESPITE an improving economic environment, the asset quality of the country's 44 commercial banks continued to worsen in February as more bad loans and idle real estate holdings piled up.

In a statement, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas said that the commercial banking sector's non-performing loan ratio moved up to 18.40 percent in February from the month-ago level of 18.30 percent. A year ago, the banks' share of bad loans to its total loan portfolio was 16.62 percent.

The increase in the NPL ratio was brought about by the P5.6-billion increase in the amount of soured loans to P295.6 billion from P290 billion, which was offset partly by the banks' increased lending activity.

Non-performing loans are loans

whose principal or interest remained unpaid for 90 days from due date.

The BSP data showed that private-sector banks had started to be more aggressive in lending. All banks, except those owned by the government, posted loan growth, driving the commercial banks' total loan portfolio up to P1.606 trillion, or P21.4 billion more than the previous month's level.

Awash with liquidity, banks are being pressured to lend to the private sector as yields of government borrowings have been declining sharply.

Commercial banks also worked to set aside more provisions for loan losses or to restructure loans. Loan loss reserves grew by 3.1 percent or P3.9 billion to P126.6 billion, bringing up the reserve cover to 44.2 percent from 43.7 percent.

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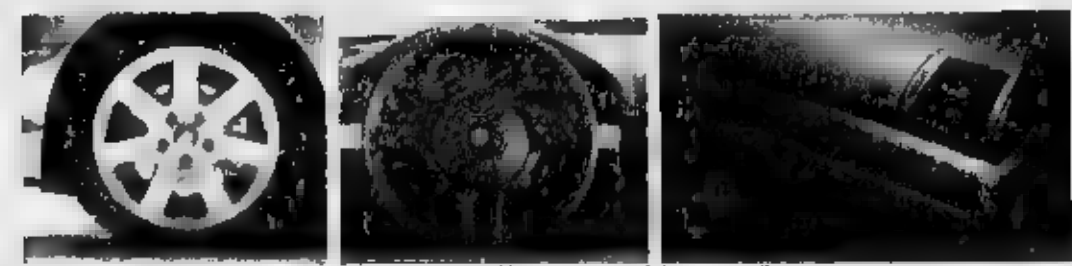
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Roxas, BOI exec at odds over auto tax reform

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

TRADE and Industry Secretary Manuel A. Roxas II and Board of Investments managing chair Gregory Domingo are reportedly at odds over the proposed tax reform in the automotive industry, specifically on the lifting of the tax exemption enjoyed by Asian utility vehicles (AUV).

Roxas is battling to either retain

the AUV's tax-free status or limit its excise tax to between one and three percent for models worth P600,000 or less in order to keep these best-selling workhorses affordable to buyers. Domingo, however, wants to scrap the AUV's tax-free status saying that the AUVs should be paying the same taxes levied on other vehicles with the same prices.

Interestingly, the Roxas-

Domingo split on the tax reform proposal—which has been blamed for the delay in finalizing the proposed tax reforms—mirrored the battle lines drawn among the industry players on this issue.

Roxas' views tallied with the position taken by Japanese assemblers such as Toyota Motor Philippines Inc. (Tamaraw), Mitsubishi Motors Philippines Corp. (Adventure) and

Isuzu Philippines (Hi-Lander) while Domingo's stand is fully backed up by Ford Motor Co. Philippines Inc.

Roxas denied any rift between him and Domingo on the tax reform proposal. He admitted, however, that his department has yet to come up with its final recommendation on the issue. The industry's tax reform proposal has been on the table for nearly two years now.

Aside from the AUV issue, the DTI has yet to agree whether to retain the current system of basing a vehicle's excise tax on its fuel type and engine size or shift to wholesale price as basis.

The Japanese assemblers have strongly opposed the shift in valuation basis considering that their models have modest engine displacements. Ford, which is keen on putting more gas-guzzling models in its show-

rooms, has been the leading advocate of the shift to wholesale prices.

Some officials of the DTI are wary of adopting wholesale prices as basis for taxing vehicles in view of the tobacco industry's bad experience with this system. Unscrupulous cigarette makers set up dozens of marketing companies to front as buyers in order to keep prices of the products at low levels.

Marketing blitz seen to boost RP tourism

By Vincent Cebreza

PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon is ready to match up Cebu City against Phuket in Thailand, Boracay against Guam in the Marianas Islands, and Bohol against Bali in Indonesia.

This is the first volley of the Philippines' international marketing blitz, which is designed to counter economic threats from China.

Gordon revealed here on Saturday that China was the real long-term threat to Philippine economics, which an upbeat tourism program aimed to address today.

He said China had started to draw away manufacturing and related industry investments from Asian countries like Indonesia and Malaysia, as soon as it enlisted with the World Trade Organization (WTO).

"In the coming days, China is going to suck more of the investments and we will lose more and more of the investments," he said.

He said tourism was Asia's most cost-effective response to the Chinese economic onslaught.

Gordon discussed the geopolitical situations of Southeast Asian tourism during a general assembly here of the University of the Philippines Alumni Association.

He also said Malacañang was proposing to Congress the creation of tourism economic zones to help draw tourism infrastructure investments to vital vacation spots, which may replace special economic zones as capital vectors in Southeast Asia.

He said the Maldives Islands near Sri Lanka, "which is in danger of disappearing in 2050 because of global warming," lured about 395 million to 467 million visitors in 1997 alone, while the Philippines attracted only about 1.9 million tourists in 2000 and 1.8 million last year.

But the country's "tourism economics" will not all be about match-ups.



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Gordon said he was also proposing a "twinning" of resources with tourist rivals Indonesia or Malaysia, particularly in air transport to soften or partially subsidize the cost of domestic and international travel between the two countries.

He said most Asian countries would need to cooperate in order to optimize the use of their meager resources, even if it meant "pushing over" the flag carrier Philippine Airlines in the process.

President Macapagal-Arroyo herself validated this economic trend on March 30 here.

"Tourism is nothing for us to make fun of... The competitive advantage of the Philippines is intensive skills in the service sectors such as information and communication technology and tourism. (These are) major sources of jobs," Ms. Macapagal said.

"You only need \$5 million (in service industries) to hire thousands of workers. But in the traditional manufacturing sector, you need \$500 million to hire (the same number of) workers," she added.

Gordon disclosed that Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad had realigned \$70 million in 2000 and P180 million this year to Malaysian tourism, in reaction to the depleting investments for manufacturing and other related industries in Malaysia. About 13 million tourists trooped to Malaysia in 2000.

Gordon said he was inclined "to do a

Subic for tourism" to wrangle exchange deals and volunteer work for hefty publicity for Cebu, Bohol and Boracay.

By going "Subic," Gordon was referring to the turnaround of the economies of Olongapo City and the Subic Bay area in Zambales after the 1991 withdrawal of American military bases. He credited this turnaround to "pure community volunteer work."

Gordon said he was tapping a similar volunteer support team from 7 million Filipino expatriates and overseas Filipino workers to market the country's vacation spots to their neighbors there.

He said volunteer work would take the place of capital pump priming. The Philippines generated only \$660,000 to market its tourism in 2000, compared with Thailand's \$45-million budget, Hong Kong's \$66 million, Malaysia's \$70 million and Singapore's \$70 million.

All these Asian countries compete for Japanese tourists, whose combined expenses in "hotel and even chewing gum bills," already represents substantial profits for countries like the Philippines.

Gordon said the country's "game plan" is to target countries with "high returns on investments."

He said a dollar's worth of advertising and marketing investment in Korea means a return in 217 Korean visitors, while a dollar spent in marketing tourism to Japan is equivalent to 62 Japanese visitors.

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Despite

From page B1

go the TRM route because it could not reverse the Tariff Commission's rejection of the petition to impose punitive duties and import quotas on cement imports under the Safeguard Measures Law.

The DTI presently imposes a provisional duty of P20.60 per bag of imported cement. It had planned to either impose punitive duties or extend the provisional duty.

However, after a closer reading of the law, Roxas said the DTI's only option was to continue collecting the provisional duty up to its full 200-day period, ending on June 28.

The government has so far collected P70 million from the provisional duty since it was imposed last December.

Roxas earlier noted that cement prices had fallen from P145 to P125 per bag in December since the duty was imposed.

Consumer groups have pointed out, however, that prices fell only because the DTI demanded this from the manufacturers.

Three months after the provisional duty was imposed, prices of cement have crept up to a peak of P145 per bag as the slowdown in imports led to a shortage of supply during the cyclical peak of the construction industry.

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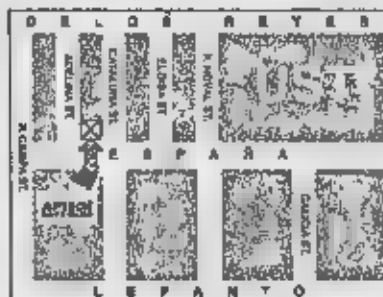
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Falling water supply is world's biggest issue

SYDNEY—A lack of clean water will be the biggest issue facing the world in the next 50 years, and governments and business are failing to face up to the challenge, a senior Australian researcher said on Monday.

Graham Harris of the state-funded Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization told an environment conference in Melbourne that business needed to understand its dependence on the environment and create a new economic framework that focused on longer-term returns.

"Even if human populations were to level off in the next 50 years, we will require double the present supply of energy, materials and water. Water is the big issue for the next 50 years," Harris said in a prepared speech.

"The vast majority of the world's people already have only limited access to clean water, basic shelter and adequate food, and the situation is not going to get any better. Without water, food, shelter and compassion, we are all lost."

Harris told delegates at the Enviro 2002 conference that the Australian government's actions, for instance, "fail to reflect the urgency... We talk too much and act too slowly."

The conference followed another in Melbourne last week that focused on the impact cities have on the ecosystem with more than half of the world's population living in urban areas.

At the end of that earlier meeting, around 40 environmental experts from around the world called on governments to control urban water use as a key part of creating "sustainable cities."

"A lot of people think 'if I've got lots of green parks and gardens, that's fantastic,'" said Harry Blustein, director of sustainable development for the Environmental Protection Authority of the Australian state of Victoria.

"But hang on. They're using enormous amounts of water, often not recycled water. Perhaps an Australian city has to look a bit browner during its summer," he told Reuters on Monday. *Reuters*

Scandal-hit Firestone wins big tire contract with GM

TOKYO—The US subsidiary of Japan's top tire maker, Bridgestone Corp., rocked by scandals since August 2000, has won a tire contract with General Motors Corp., a company source said Monday.

"It is a fact that we have a contract (with GM), but we cannot speak about the details," the Bridgestone source told AFP, declining to say when the deal was signed.

It would be the first major contract for Bridgestone/Firestone Inc. since the firm recalled millions of tires after a string of fatal accidents involving its products on Ford Motor Co. vehicles.

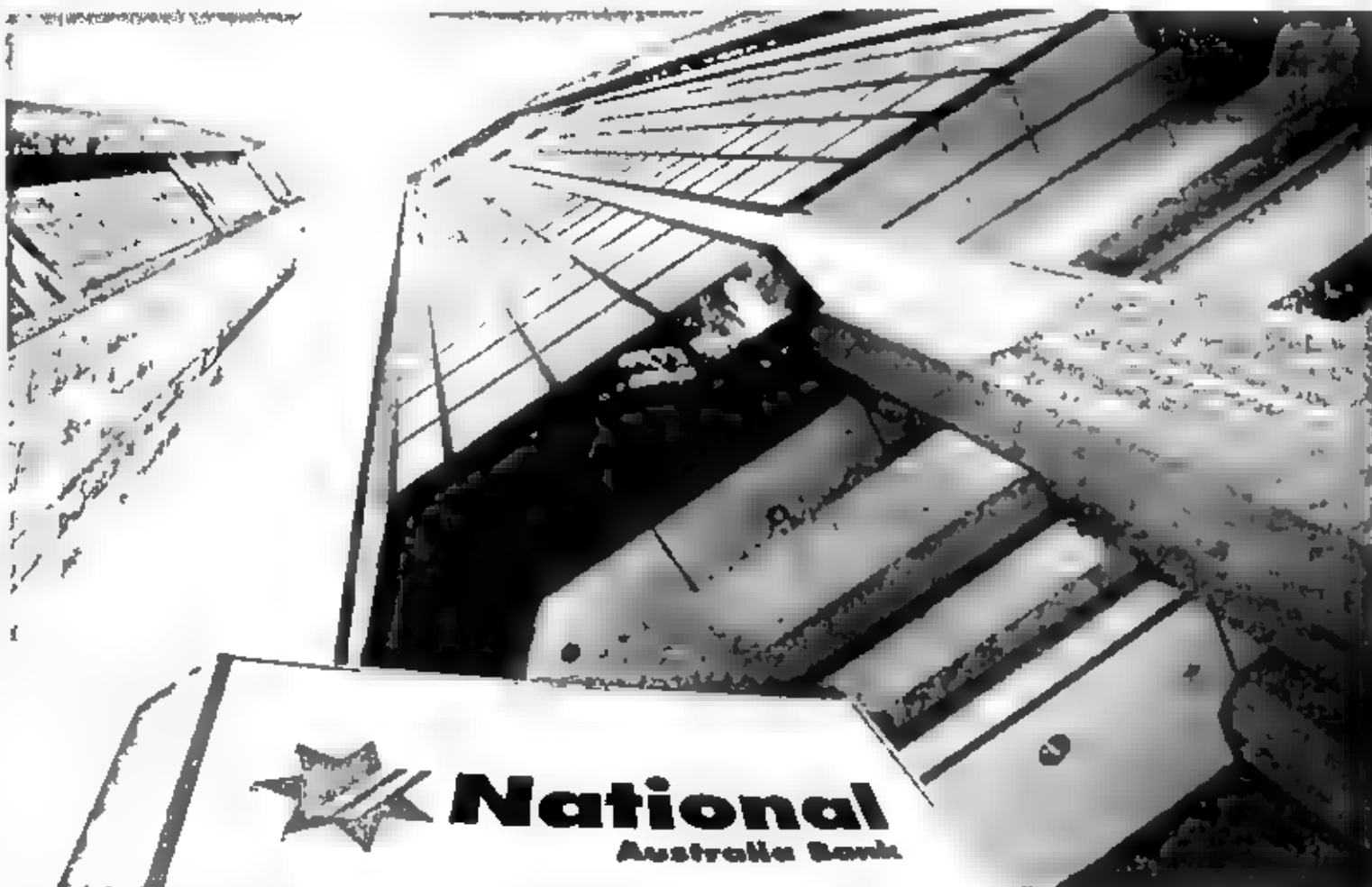
Bridgestone/Firestone will expand a tire plant in Canada to meet an order for 2.5 million tires per year for GM's remodeled Sat-

urn Ion and Chevrolet Malibu vehicles due out this autumn, the Nihon Keizai newspaper said, quoting company sources.

Bridgestone will invest 5 billion yen (\$38.1 million) to expand the daily 15,000-tire output at its Quebec plant by 10 percent to 15 percent, it said.

The firm had scaled back operations at its US unit, closing down a factory in Decatur, Illinois, last December to leave just 11 plants in Canada, the United States and Mexico.

Bridgestone/Firestone became embroiled in a major dispute with Ford after a series of deadly accidents involving Ford Explorer vehicles fitted with Firestone tires, which US authorities said claimed 271 lives. *AFP*



THE ENTRANCE of National Australia Bank House reflects the Sydney skyline. Australia's largest bank announces that it plans to sack 2,050 employees as part of a major restructuring of its worldwide operations. Most of the job losses are expected to be in the bank's administration and back office areas, where new technology and process re-engineering are to help streamline operations. *AFP*

Australia's biggest bank to sack over 2,000 workers

SYDNEY—Australia's biggest bank, National Australia Bank Ltd., said Monday it would sack more than 2,000 employees as part of a major restructuring of its worldwide operations.

Around 1,500 job losses will be in Australia, and most are expected to be in the bank's administration and back office areas, which are being streamlined through new technology.

"On a group basis, including the Australian redundancies, the redundancy figure is expected to be 2,050," the bank said.

"Overall, there will be a reduction of 3,400 positions, but this will be offset by the creation of 1,400 new positions and natural attrition and redeployment."

The redundancies are expected to cost between A\$175 million (US\$93 million) and A\$225 million this year.

Details of the cuts come after the NAB confirmed last week it would shut 56 branches in rural areas across Australia.

The restructuring followed losses by the NAB of US\$2 billion through its US mortgage

subsidiary, HomeSide, late last year.

NAB chief executive Frank Cicuto said several hundred million dollars of new investment would be made in growth areas of the bank as part of the restructuring plan.

Cost savings of A\$370 million were expected by September 2004 as a result, he said.

The main areas of investment would include A\$200 million for NAB's wealth management division over the next three years to create a market leading adviser

system in Australia.

The bank said its earnings growth in 2003 and 2004 would benefit from efficiency and revenue gains.

Its financial targets to 2004 included cash earnings per share growth of between 7 and 10 percent in 2001/02 and more than 12 percent in 2003 and 2004.

Return on equity was also expected to top 18 percent a year.

NAB shares fell 14 cents to A\$31.55 following the announcement. *AFP*



Sony Ericsson to set up cell unit in China

TOKYO—Sony Ericsson Mobile Communications said Monday that it was forming a Beijing-based subsidiary, planned by the end of May, to bolster the newly merged company's penetration of the Chinese market.

Japan's Sony Corp. combined with Sweden's Ericsson last October to form Sony Ericsson. In China, however, the two companies still market handsets separately under their individual brand names.

Setting up the subsidiary is the first step in introducing Sony Ericsson products there, Sony Ericsson spokesperson Utako Higuchi said.

The subsidiary, yet to be named, will be fully owned and based in Beijing.

Sony already has operations there, while Ericsson runs plants in Beijing and Nanjing.

The venture is still pending approval from Chinese authorities, Higuchi said.

Sony Ericsson's Beijing-based arm will concentrate on making GSM mobile phones for the Chinese market, but it will also be a platform for introducing next generation, or 3G, mobile phones when the technology is introduced to China, sometime after 2003.

Sony Ericsson holds the third largest share of the global mobile phone market after Finnish firm Nokia Corp. and US company Motorola Inc.

In a bid to boost that stake, the company is focusing on China, where the number of mobile phone subscribers already exceeds 140 million people, making it the world's largest market. **AP**

PCCW appoints former head of Lucent's Asia business as COO

HONG KONG—Leading Hong Kong telecommunications firm Pacific Century CyberWorks said Monday that it had appointed former Lucent Technologies executive Michael Butcher as chief operating officer.

Butcher is reportedly in line as a successor to founder Richard Li as chief executive, although the company describes this as "pure speculation."

PCCW said Butcher would immediately replace William Cheung, who resigned as chief operating officer.

Butcher was formerly president of Lucent Technologies international operations, after heading the company's Asia-Pacific business in Hong Kong.

"In addition to his knowledge and experience in Asia-Pacific, Mike's unique experience and background in systems integration solutions and services, combined with telecommunications, significantly strengthens the management team of PCCW for the next stage of development and growth of the company," Li said in a statement.

Li, the youngest son of Hong Kong tycoon Li Ka-shing, had said as recently as last month that despite speculation, the company had no plans to find a replacement chief executive in the short term.

However, The Asian Wall Street Journal Monday cited an informed source as saying Li, who is also the firm's chair, had assured Butcher that he eventually would become chief executive, although no specific timetable was given.

PCCW spokesperson Joan Wagner told AFP she was unaware of the source of the report, adding theories surrounding Li's imminent replacement at the helm were pure speculation.

Dealers said the appointment of Butcher as chief operating officer was seen as muddy positive by investors. **AFP**



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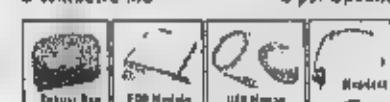
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BRANCHES: Q.C. Tel. No. 371-5611 • STA. LUCIA EAST GRAND MALL Tel. No. 646-6536 • SM MEGAMALL Tel. No. 633-1724 • SM MANILA Tel. No. 525-3210 • SM NORTH Tel. No. 927-5831 • SM SOUTHMALL Tel. No. 806-9595 • SM BACOD Tel. No. (046) 502-0528 • SM CEBU Tel. No. (032) 234-0219 • SM PAMPANGA Tel. No. 0451961 2225 • HARRISON PLAZA Tel. No. 525-7731 • AYALA ALABANG Tel. No. 807-8987 • QUAD PARK SQUARE 1 Tel. No. 812-6734

BRANCHES: 2/F 6797 AYALA AVE. cor. HERRERA ST., MAKATI Tel. No. 892-2222 • G/F SUNVAR PLAZA - MAKATI Tel. No. 843-4371 • PASO DE ROXAS MAKATI Tel. No. 815-4570 • G/F PACIFIC CORPORATE BUILDING - WEST AVE., Q.C. Tel. No. 373-9972 • VCE BUILDING - PAG-ASA, Q.C. Tel. No. 929 0411 • G/F METROLANE COMPLEX - CUBAO, Q.C. Tel. No. 912-2785 • G/F KATIPUNAN 2000 BLDG. - KATIPUNAN, Q.C. Tel. No. 433-1224 • CABANATUAN - MAHARAJA HIGHWAY Tel. No. (044) 690 2000 • CABANATUAN-MEGA CENTER Tel. No. (044) 600 0674



In Loving Memory of

Paz Valisno Siojo

joined our Lord and her beloved parents Bernardo (†), and Flora (†), on April 5, 2002
at the age of 93 years, 11 months and 16 days
in Burnaby General Hospital, Burnaby, British Columbia, Canada.

She is survived by her nephews and nieces from her deceased brothers and sisters:

Istanislawa Enriquez (†)
Danding, Porfirio, Nestor, Bobby,
Sonny, Nene, Baby, Marian

Joaquin Siojo (†)
Pacing, Dolores, Arsenio, Angel (†),
Naty, Carding, Felisa, Paquito

Rosario Catu (†)
Alfredo, Teresita, Mario, Pepito,
Evelyn, Violeta, Victoria, Paquito (†),
Pacita, Oscar, Ben

Francisco Siojo (†)
Romy, Manolo

Caridad Dela Fuente (†)
Chitong, Popeng,
Nene, Narciso

Emilia Gutierrez (†)
Peping, Maning, Rene,
Antonia, Anita, Nido, Efren

Domingo Siojo (†)
Totoy, Medy

Vicente Siojo (†)
Sollie

Interment will be on April 10, 2002 at the Gardens of Gethsemani, Surrey, British Columbia, Canada.
We request the pious readers to pray for the repose of her soul



"My soul finds rest to God alone, from
Him comes my Salvation."
Psalm 62:2

OUR DEARLY BELOVED MOMSIE

Aida Castillo Herrera

January 15, 1919 - April 7, 2002

Now peacefully rests in the
Infinite Grace and Goodness of the Lord
on the 7th day of April 2002 at the age of 83.

Her loving husband Ret. Major Heracleo P. Herrera (†),
her loving children Baby & Tony Paez,
Molau & Jessie Villegas, Rey & Cely Herrera,
Gerry & Lot Herrera, Roland & Dita Herrera,
grandchildren Marga, John & Cecay Paez, Jesselle Villegas,
Myka, Issa, Angelica Herrera,
Miguel & Gabriel Herrera, Renzo Herrera;
surviving brother Eager, Carlos L. Castillo;
sister Teresita L. Castillo, sisters-in-law Nieves, Tinay, and
Lilia Castillo, Maria, Nestle Herrera;
brother-in-law Dorotea Herrera, nephews and nieces,
other relatives and friends request the pious readers
to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the
Holy Trinity Memorial Chapel, Sucat Road,
Purification City

Interment will be on Thursday, April 11, 2002,
after the 2:00 PM Mass at
St. John the Evangelist Church in Tanauan, Batangas.
Mass at 9:00 AM will also be offered at
the Holy Trinity Memorial Chapel
on the same day.

To do your will is my delight; my God, your law is in my heart.

Psalm 40:9

Julia Jimenez Morales

(Moncada, Tarlac & Bayambang, Pangasinan)

Reunited with her Father in heaven on April 8, 2002 at the age of 88.

Our family, brothers, sisters, relatives and children request your prayers
for Mamang.

Children:

Nancy Celia/Romy Valenzuela, Louie/Lilli Morales, Pricilla/Butch Lavado;
Gloria "Queenie" Ramos

Grandchildren:

Rona, Raymond, Rashi, Roderick, Raquel, Bebs, Bambino
Michael, Chummy, Luis Anthony, Vanessa, Patrick
Katie
All, Lyle, Monica

Her body lies in state at Don Bosco (Makati) Faith Chapel up to Thursday,
April 11 and will be transferred to Moncada, Tarlac on Friday, April 12, 2002.

Interment will be on April 13, Saturday after the Church services at 8:00 a.m.
at the Moncada Municipal Cemetery.

JOSEFINA A. OBUSAN

Died Peacefully at the age of 84
on April 6, 2002.

Her beloved children, relatives and dear
friends, mourn her passing and wish her
eternal rest.

Her body lies in state at No. 4 Chapel Road,
Mia Housing Area, Pasay City (Tel. Nos.
831-0894 / 513-9100).

Interment is set tentatively on Thursday,
April 11, 2002 at Manila Memorial Park.

April 1942: Bataan and Corbin

St. Bienvenido Oira
Cpl. Juan Oira
Pvt. Manuel Oira

60 yrs. after your supreme sacrifice, we,
your descendants born after you gave your lives
for our country's sake, remember and honor you
and your noble deed that set an example of true
patriotism for us to emulate.
"There is nothing greater than dying for
one's country."
Certainly, you are the pride of the family.

The Oira's of
Guinobatan, Albay

CARLOS JIMENEZ LOPEZ

Died peacefully in the Grace of our Lord
on April 6, 2002 at the age of 76.

His bereaved family, relatives and friends request
the readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.
His remains lie in state at the Holy Trinity Memorial
Chapel, Sucat Road, Purification City.
Interment will be announced later at the Manila
Memorial Park, Purification City.

Our Dear Beloved

ROSELINA C. WEINSTEIN

Peacefully joined her Creator
on April 8, 2002
at the age of 80.

Her daughter Ma. Ruby W. Lavides,
husband Jojo Lavides; brother Isagani de Castro;
nieces, nephews, and grandchildren request the
pious readers to pray for the eternal rest of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at Alvarez Funeral
Homes in San Roque, Cavite City.

Funeral Mass followed by interment will be
at Himlayan Caviteño at 2:00 p.m., Thursday,
April 11, 2002.

"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life and I shall live in
the house of the Lord forever."
Psalm 23:6

GAVINO CRUZ MENDIOLA

of
Sikatan Village & Marikina City

Now peacefully rests in the Grace and Goodness of the Lord
on the 7th of April 2002 at the age of 86.

His bereaved family—wife Mercedes (†); children Armando (†), Teresita (Ine), Mila &
Rene Mababa, Lynn Cabasag, Roy & Aglo, Domingo (†), Malette & Mike Zea, grandchildren,
great grandchildren, great great grandchildren, and other relatives remember him with love and prayers,
and request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Imperial Chapel, Second Floor, Old Building at the La Panzeria
Paz, Amneta Avenue, Quezon City

His body will be transferred to the Parish of the Lord of Divine Mercy Church, Maam corner
Madras in Streets, Sikatuna Village at 10:00 AM on Thursday, April 11th and Funeral Mass will be
offered at 1:00 PM.

Interment follows immediately at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City.

People, Events & Products

Aries Espinosa, Editor

aespinoza@inquirer.com.ph

WTCMM to become big family home for Home & Garden 2002

FOR THREE days in September this year, the huge exhibition hall of the World Trade Center in Metro Manila (WTCMM) along Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City, will be transformed into one big family home, with a garden to boot, with every room adorned with the latest furnishings and furniture for modern living, and the garden alive with horticultural delights and the latest gardening tools and equipment.

During those three days from Sept. 19 to 21, Home & Garden Asia 2002 will be held. It is the first exhibition of its kind to be held in the Philippines to showcase the latest goods and products

for the home and garden.

Organized by H&G International, a division of Leverage International (Consultants), Home & Garden Asia 2002 will be participated in by leading manufacturers, distributors, dealers and retailers of home appliances and furnishings and garden decors. Products to be displayed will come from the United States, Europe and Asian countries including the Philippines, Japan, China, Korea, Vietnam, Indonesia, and Iran.

Home products to be displayed include air conditioners, component systems, computers, refrigerators and freezers, corded/cordless telephones, electric fans, flat irons, karaoke, mi-

crowave ovens, rice cookers, vacuum cleaners, toasters, washing machines and dry-

Security systems and equipment, dining room, living room and bedroom furniture and furnishings, bathroom fixtures, floor coverings and carpets, home decors and housewares, lamp and lighting fixtures, and windows and window grills.

Also to be exhibited are do-it-yourself kits, draperies and curtain fixtures, household utensils, musical instruments, paints, pest control products, and remodeling and renovation products.

Garden items to be displayed will include cutflowers, equipment and materials on

horticulture, garden décor and products, garden tools, landscaping equipment and supplies, swimming pool equipment and supplies, irrigation systems and equipment, ornamental greenery, and outdoor furniture.

Home & Garden 2002 is supported by the US Embassy Commercial Service, European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines, Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the Subdivision and Housing Developers Association.

Those interested to join can call Elizabeth Cruz at 818-6821 and 813-2473, or Robert Sanchez at 813-2472 and 810-1389, or e-mail lvrgz@netasia.net.



COCOLIFE, PLDT TELESCOOP MOA

Cocolife recently signed a memorandum of agreement with the PLDT Employees Cooperative Inc. (Telescoop). Employees of PLDT can now enjoy the benefits of the Employee Security Program Plus (ESP+) which provides insurance coverage and salary loans for members. The MOA signing took place at the executive dining room of the UCPB head office. Signing for Cocolife is lawyer Alfredo C. Tumulador, Jr., president,

and for PLDT Telescoop Francisco Caballero, chair, president, and CEO of PLDT Telescoop. Also present were Efrén Yambot, first vice president of Cocolife, Virgilio Parangit, chair audit inventory committee, Ephraim Castro, administrative manager of PLDT Telescoop, Nikko DG Ledesma, head, marketing and franchising of MMD, lawyer Francis M. Nob head, mass marketing department, Ador Sult, servicing agent of the Cocolife-ROA branch



SMART PHONES FOR DANCE PARTY

Two club enthusiasts who enjoyed the successful Chicane Live dance party got a bonus in the form of GSM cellphones from party sponsor Smart Communications Inc. The winners, Jon Canto and Cesca Litton, were chosen by Smart officials among the immense crowd of clubbers that included celebrities, models, and multimedia artists. The event,

which was also presented by Axx Gravity and Close-up in cooperation with MTV Philippines and Big Fish, Joey 92.3 and Casino Filipino Parañaque, brought out clubbing enthusiasts as well as neophytes. Shown is Ramon R. Isberto, Jr., Smart public affairs head awarding the Nokia 5510 Smart mobile package to Chicane guy of the night Jon Canto.



JOB HOPEFUL IN MEDEX

Nurse Asterio Cayabyab (left) answers interview questions from BMI Healthcare (London) representatives Philip Pitt and Jan Hale during Medex, a nursing recruitment event organized by ADD International Services Inc. and Drake International in Hotel Intercontinental, Makati. Cayabyab is one of over 1,000 job applicants interviewed by representatives from 14 of the United Kingdom's noted hospitals and medical institutions. The

three-day event is the first medical exposition of its kind to be staged in the country. ADD is the country's number one provider to the United Kingdom's National Health Service Trust, and was awarded with a special citation by the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration for developing the UK market for Filipino healthcare professionals. Medex is in cooperation with BPI, Cathay Pacific, FedEx, Filinvest Land Inc., Philam Life, PLDT Touch Card and Tour Spectrum Inc.

A 'beauty contest' for Civics

HONDA CARS Philippines Inc., together with the Federation of Junior Marketing Association and NecVox Automobile Audio/Video System, presents the Civic Beauty Contest, a best in car show competition for Honda Civics. The Civic Beauty Contest is open to all bona fide or enrolled students of any college or university, and entries are limited to any 2001 Civic variant.

This unique beauty contest gives enthusiasts a chance to dress up and show off their youthful, sporty and stylish Civics. The display and awarding of participants will be on April 13 at the Pier One Bar and Grill at the Port Square.

At stake in the Civic Beauty Contest are trips for two to Hong Kong and Boracay, and other great prizes. Special awards will also be given for best in paint, best in engine display, and people's choice. The car must be registered under the name

of the student and/or any immediate family member or up to a first-degree relative.

At the same time, all Honda dealerships nationwide will be displaying their own dressed up Civics at their respective showrooms for the professional category of the Civic Beauty Contest.

Interested students may inquire at their respective Junior Marketing Association offices, or through the HCPI customer relations group MBA, Law and Medicine students are disqualified from joining. For more information, call Abbie or Lee of the HCPI customer relations group at 893-9618, fax 812-6452, cell 0917-5008265, or e-mail customer_relations@hondaphil.com.

The Civic Beauty Contest is also held in cooperation with Air Philippines, Subic Legend Hotel, Lucky Strike, 97.1 WLS FM, Joey 92.3, 93.9 KC FM, and 96.3 WROCK.



The A-C-E is in Sunquick

SUNQUICK is giving you more reasons to keep your kids healthy. Aside from its

delightful fruity taste that your kids have come to love, Sunquick juice concentrate is also enriched with the A-C-E to good health—vitamins A, C, and E. Vitamin A is for good eyesight, C promotes a strong immune system, and E is for healthy skin. Let your kids drink to good health. Give them a glass of Sunquick everyday. Sunquick is available (from left) in Tropical Fruit, Lemon Iced Tea, Mandarin, Orange, Lemon, Red Orange, and Peach Orange flavors.



FIRST WINNERS IN MASTERCARD PROMO

MasterCard International has awarded almost P250,000 in cash and other prizes to 33 lucky MasterCard cardholders that won in the first monthly draw of the MasterCard Priceless Pleasures Promotion. Priceless Pleasures is the third in the company's highly successful series of usage promotions in the Philippines, leveraged on the award-winning Priceless advertising concept. Close to half a million pesos in cash and other prizes await the

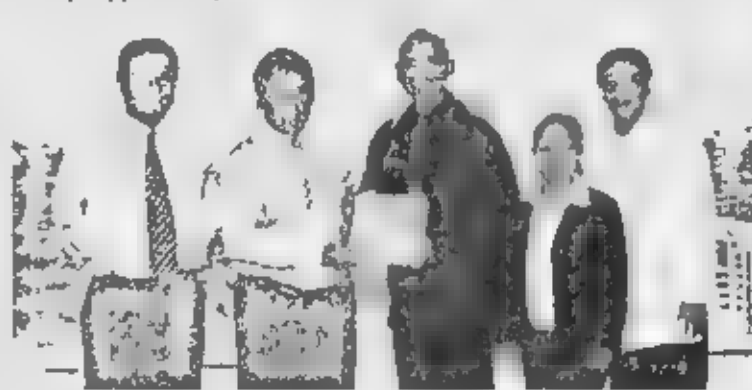
lucky winners in the succeeding second and third monthly draws. The top cash prizes of P1 million and P500,000, and three trip packages to Bangkok will be given away at the grand draw. Shown is Judith Dayrit (right), MasterCard International director for marketing and member relations, with cash prize winners from the first monthly draw (from left) Josefina Reynante, Cecile dela Paz, Grace Francisco, Evelyn Genesero, Armand Isidro, and Adiel Cruz.



MANILA Y HONORARY PRESIDENT

Evelina Atienza, wife of Mayor Lito Atienza (fifth from left) was installed the honorary president of the YMCA of Manila by Manila Y president Dr. Cindy Dolente Ang (fourth from left) during the annual general membership meeting of the YMCA recently.

Also shown (from left) are director Feiza S. Florendo, Feiza S. Sy, second VP, Gov. Baby P. Ortiz, PRD; Amaia R. Gomez, board member, and Vilma D. Umangan, national president of YMCA. This year's theme is "Yers: Towards a Culture of Excellence."



DHL GOES ERIC

DHL Worldwide Express (Philippines), the world's leading international air express network, has chosen Eric, or Enterprise Resource Information and Control System to boost its efficiency in handling human resources and payroll functions. "We found Eric to be of the right level of functionality for DHL," says John Steuart, national financial controller of DHL. Local software firm Jupiter Systems, a member of Vantage Group, is the maker and implementer of Eric. Due to the

close cooperation between DHL and Jupiter Systems, the payroll module was implemented in three weeks from the USA. Two months. The human resources and time card modules are expected to go online soon to fully serve DHL's new country office. Shown are (from left) DHL national human resources manager Derek Tham, Steuart, JSI president Fermin Taruc, Eric applications consultant Sonia Buenafior, and JSI VP for consulting services Noel Bernardo.



SUBARU IMPREZA WRX IN RP

General Motors Automobiles Philippines (GMPh) recently launched the Subaru Impreza WRX, a descendant of World Rally Championship cars. The perfect combination of the all-wheel-drive system and the horizontally opposed engine, which are also present in all Subaru vehicles, gives the Subaru Impreza WRX driving stability and excellent road traction in all types of terrain. The Subaru Impreza WRX was

unveiled by (from left) Ellich Matsumoto, general manager for Asia Pacific and Latin America of Subaru overseas division and Harold Koh, president and general manager of GMPh. Interested buyers can place their orders in any GM AutoWorld dealer in Makati (843-0217 to 20), Quezon Avenue (374-1250 to 59), Cebu (32 2340426) Pampanga (45-9630888) and at Shaw (535-4938).

INQUIRER RiViA

By BONG BARRAMEDA

Cough

Q. Why do we cough?

A. Coughing helps to get rid of anything that touches or tickles the larynx (the back of your throat) or the trachea (the tube going down to your lungs). If any foreign matter gets down there, it naturally is a good idea to get rid of it. That's what a cough is supposed to do. In coughing you take in a small breath and quickly start to breathe out. There is a sudden opening of the end of the trachea and out comes a sudden blast of air. Since it is a reflex action, we cough whether we want to or not. When you have a cold, there may be a continued tickling or irritation of the larynx and coughing may be hard to stop.

For the Record. Surprising as it may seem, too much oxygen is actually poisonous. Doctors do sometimes give 100 percent oxygen in certain health emergencies, such as severe lung disease. However, that is nearly five times the normal concentration of oxygen in the air. Medical experts say that continuous breathing of 100 percent oxygen for an extended period of time can cause accumulation of fluid in the lungs, collapse of the air sacs, convulsions, and, in premature infants, even blindness. Much lower oxygen concentrations are used for prolonged treatment in hospitals to treat asthmatics, victims of heart attacks, and patients recovering from lung surgery.

Fast Forward. This day in 1865: The American Civil War ended with the surrender of Confederate leader General Robert E. Lee to his Union counterpart, General Ulysses Grant, at the Appomattox House in Virginia. Seventy-seven years later, in 1942, another famous surrender as US General Edward King yielded Bataan to the Japanese Imperial Army.

WORD WATCH

Abulia (ay byoo loo uh): loss of willpower



For breast cancer survivors

THE CLA Bang Foundation, in its commitment to helping Filipino women living with breast cancer is currently offering limited anti-breast cancer drugs at special rates. Tamoxifen 20 mg is offered at P25 per tablet (compared to P62 per tablet at drugstores). Arimidex 1 mg is offered at P320 per tab at (compared to P490 per tablet at leading hospitals). For inquiries, call Hershey or Rocio at 810-0330 from Monday to Thursday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

CMAP confab in Baguio

THE CIRCULATION Managers Association of the Philippines (CMAP) will sponsor three major projects: a reading awareness campaign, a readership training seminar and the dealers' regional conference to be held at Session Road, Burnham Park and Mountain Lodge in Baguio City on April 10, 11 and 12, respectively. The highlight of the events is the regional conference which starts at 8 a.m. About 80 guests and delegates from Northern Luzon regions will participate. CMAP president Bienvenido Baltazar, circulation manager of the Philippine Daily Inquirer, CMAP project directors, and CMAP member publications invites all newsdealers-delegates, Prado-CMGroup, NMCDAP and co-sponsors, to attend this annual CMAP activity. For inquiries, call Cristy at 931-0103, 0917-4462888 and Raul Perez at 0916-5416720.

'Scentses' candle, herb exhibit

PHILTRADE Exhibits, in cooperation with Bayview Park Hotel is hosting "Scentses", a Candles, Scents and Herbs Exhibit over an afternoon tea called "Mystique Merienda" at the hotel's lobby from April 10 to 18. The exhibit features unique designs and styles of candles for decorative and functional purposes, and soothing aromatherapy. Activities during the exhibit include fortune telling, tattoo demonstration, herbal beauty application, massage oil-making and candle-making demonstration. Exhibit opens from 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. and is open to the public. For details call Philtrade Exhibits at 820-7878, or 820-1570.

Aurora: A potential investment haven

By Raffy Castillo
Contributor

ALTHOUGH at present considered as one of the depressed provinces in the country, the province of Aurora carries a lot of potential that may just turn it to be another Palawan, Cebu or Subic.

House Bill 1234 titled "Aurora Export Special Economic Zone and Free Port," authored by Rep. Bellaflor Angara-Castillo (Lone District, Aurora) is currently being deliberated in Congress. This aims to expedite the development of the area and attract the steady flow of investments both from Philippine and international enterprises.

Massive project

Another great opportunity for investors is the Pacific Coast City Ecozone, a massive project to develop a new coastal city in the provinces of Aurora and Quezon. The development plan involves the construction of an airport, seaport, new roads, resorts and residential, commercial and industrial areas.

The Special Economic Zone and Tourism Estate was created in January 2000 through Proclamation 233, pursuant to the Special Economic Zones Act of 1995. The proclamation has designated certain areas located in Barangay Umiray, Dingalan, Aurora Province and in Barangay Umiray, Gen. Nakar, Quezon Province to collectively make up the new "Pacific Coast City Ecozone." The ecozone masterplan involves the development of some 30,000 hectares.

According to Rep. Angara-Castillo, the ecozone will be developed within the framework of the Constitution and the Local Gov-



REP. Bellaflor Angara-Castillo

NOEL CAPARROS

ernment Code into a modern progressive agro-industrial, commercial, financial, investment and tourist center. The masterplan aims to make it decentralized, self-reliant and self-sustaining.

"Residential areas will be integrated into the plan. It can also be an ideal retirement haven with a relaxed rustic ambience amid cosmopolitan amenities," Rep. Angara-Castillo said.

Transportation, telecommunications and other facilities needed to attract legitimate and productive foreign investments will be provided. The ecozone planners also aim to generate linkage industries

and employment opportunities for the people of the province and neighboring towns and cities.

The ecozone will be managed and operated as a separate customs territory to facilitate the free flow, entry and movement of goods. Foreign citizens and companies owned by non-Filipinos in whatever proportion may set up enterprises in the ecozone either by themselves or in joint venture with Filipinos in any sector of industry, international trade and commerce.

5 phases of dev't

The Pacific Coastal City Ecozone plan designates five distinct phases of development through

the year 2020. At each successive stage, major infrastructure investments in transportation and utility systems will create new real estate development opportunities.

The early phases will create predominantly resort and second home sites, together with potential government, corporate and academic location opportunities. Later phases will provide a greater variety of development opportunities, including institutional, industrial and commercial land to support the growing resident population.

Phase I involves the development of independent growth centers opened up in sequence, or simultaneously, based on improved coastal road access and a new commuter airport. Other development opportunities include marinas, resorts, residential areas and universities.

Infrastructure opportunities include a coastal access toll road to Infanta commuter airport, flood control, utility systems such as power generation and distribution, telecommunications, water systems, sewage collection and treatment.

Phase 2 entails the expansion of water-oriented resort uses together with growth of support services for year-round residents. Additional development opportunities will be provided and infrastructure opportunities involve utility system expansion and port facilities at Dingalan.

In Phase 3 of the masterplan, the city begins to mature as the nature of development diversifies from its earlier resort-oriented ori-

gins. In Phase 4, completion of a road link from Manila through the Sierra Madre mountains provides impetus for expanded growth along the Umiray River Corridor. Infrastructure opportunities include an access toll road to Metro Manila and utility system expansion.

Phase 5 envisions the completion of a rail link from Manila to Dingalan Port through the site, together with a new regional airport. This will provide the final links in the regional transportation system. Infrastructure opportunities include a commuter and cargo rail link to Metro Manila, regional airport expansion and utility system expansion.

Roads

Distance from Manila to Baler, capital town of Aurora, is 230 kilometers and travel time under present circumstances is seven hours on the average including pit stops and snacks. Baler to Casiguran is another 125 kilometers with rougher and steeper roads. Usual travel time is four hours.

The roads to Aurora are still generally unpaved but through the joint efforts of Sen. Edgardo Angara and Rep. Angara-Castillo, and the support of the national

government, paving of the Baler-Bongabon Road will hopefully be completed in the next few years. This should cut travel time by almost two hours.

Rep. Angara-Castillo has also spearheaded the construction of numerous farm-to-market roads and development of various eco-tourism projects during her current term and the previous two

Aurora is traversed by a total road network of 1,507.7 km. According to the Aurora webpage, most of these roads (89.7 percent) are gravel-surfaced. Earth-surfaced roads comprise almost 6 percent, while 3.4 percent are asphalted. Only 0.1 percent of roads are concrete.

During the rainy and monsoon season, the gravel and earth roads are very difficult to traverse. Some of these unsurfaced road sections cover mountainous terrain. These sections are prone to landslides, especially during the rainy season. Rep. Angara-Castillo is optimistic that should the ecozone development plan push through, all these travails in traveling to Aurora will be a thing of the past and the province will prove to be an attractive investment haven for both local and foreign investors.

Realtors board celebrates 43rd anniversary

THE PASAY-MAKATI Realtors Board Inc. takes on a positive outlook on the real estate industry for its 43rd anniversary celebration, which has for its theme "Let the Good Times Roll!"

All PMRB realtors will be in the era of the '70s attire for their April 12 ago-go party, which will be held at the Phoenix Room, Bel Air Clubhouse, Hydra corner Solar Street, Bel-Air, Makati City. The affair starts at 7 p.m. with the '70s disco music all night long.

The PMRB is headed by president Yvette C. Poe. Other officers are Gilberto R. Yungco, vice president; Wilfredo C. Manzon, board secretary; Lucia O. Sebastian, treasurer; Mercy S. Reyes, assistant treasurer; Ma. Milagros R. Villena, PRO; Nicolas P. Gonzales Jr., internal auditor. Members of the board of directors are Dogenes A. Barredo, Rosaura M. Fernando, Susan O. Gay, Carmencita Gaerlan, Benjamin N. Jacinto and Malaya A. Laraya.

Presidential adviser is Domingo D. de Vera. Board consultants are Emmanuel H. Bocaling, Phil M. Coquia, Ma. Lilia I. Tancuan, Lucille J. Cuesay and Myrna A. Tort. Lawyer Ariel T. Martinez is the legal adviser.

Local architects laud new terminal facilities

A DELEGATION from the Philippine Institute of Architecture recently had a walk-in tour of the soon-to-open International Passenger Terminal 3 and was impressed by its facilities.

The country's top architects lauded the massive structure that created a focal point giving way to its soaring space (182,000 sq. m), saying the new airport will address the problem of "first impression" that travelers associate with upon their arrival in the country.

The delegation also noted the architectural design's distinctive expression between state-of-the-art technology and the diverse Filipino culture—reflecting the country's advancement and modernization.

Said Manuel Noche, professor of Architecture and department chair for designs, College of Architecture, UST: "This airport is long overdue. So far the wait has been worth it. What I find very impressive is the departure area. It will finally address the problem of inherent Filipino culture of receiving and sending off their friends and loved ones."

IPT 3 will have a design capacity of 13 million passengers a year, 33,000 peak day capacity, 34

air-bridges, 9 moving walkways, 29 elevators, 314 display monitors, 118 immigration counters, 140 check-in counters, 8 departure baggage carousels, 7 arrival carousels, 20 X-ray screening machines and 20 walkthrough detectors. Another unique aspect of the terminal is the presence of an ecumenical chapel.

The new terminal was designed by world-renowned American architecture firm Skidmore Owings and Merrill and constructed under the supervision of Japan's Takenaka Corp. It is currently leading a team of architects and engineers in the design effort for the new international complex at the former Villamor Air Base.

The Philippine International Air Terminal Co. (Piatco) heads the consortium of Philippine companies in construction of the new terminal estimated at US\$500 million. It controls 60 percent of the project. Flughafen/Main AG (Frankfurt Airport Services Worldwide) has a 30 percent stake in the new terminal while Nissho Iwai of Japan holds the remaining 10 percent. IPT 3 is the biggest project for the German company outside of Germany and is the single largest infrastructure venture in Southeast Asia.

TERMITES CAN LEAVE YOU HOMELESS

Destruction due to termite attack may not be as sudden or violent as damage from fire, but it is much more likely to occur. Since the Philippines is a terrific breeding and feeding ground for subterranean (underground) termites, one could say that there are only two kinds of homes here: those that have termites and those that will.

Termites work 24 hours a day and feast on wood and any cellulosic material like paper or even fabric. So anything from picture frames, radio speakers, books, textiles to hardwood flooring, window jambs and ceilings can become fodder for termites. Even if you live in a medium-rise condo, you are not far above and out of harm's way because termites are not afraid of heights - they can scale the concrete building and creep through cracks and openings in the structure. For home/property owners, this means hundreds of thousands worth of structural repairs, priceless, irreplaceable properties turned to powder, and many sleepless nights.

Now total termite colony elimination is possible in the Philippines. US-based Dow AgroSciences developed Sentricon System, a breakthrough technology that has been taking the pest control industry by storm. Sentricon wipes out entire colonies by taking advantage of natural termite behavior and getting them where they live. It acts like an early warning device and a treatment method, and works in three steps: First, pest control professionals will place monitoring stations in the soil around the sites, checking these regularly for signs of termite activity. Second, as soon as termites begin feeding in the station, Sentricon technicians will replace the monitoring unit with a Baitube device that contains termite bait (the substance prevents them from molting, so that they are unable to grow, causing them to die). The termites will unsuspectingly summon their nest mates to the site by leaving special scent trails that lead to the bait. Finally, once the colony is eliminated, the bait will be replaced with new monitoring devices, which the technician will inspect closely and regularly for renewed termite activity.

Hexaflumuron, the bait material in Sentricon, is the first pest control product in the US to receive "fast track" registration from the Environmental Protection Agency in the new "Reduced Pesticide Risk" category. Sentricon was also awarded by the Clinton administration the US Presidential Green Chemistry Award for its commitment to keep the environment safe. The technology is effective, odorless, absolutely non-disruptive, environmentally friendly and safe which makes it ideal for homes and hospitals, drugstores and food establishments, schools and libraries, museums and warehouses, clubhouses and high-rise buildings.

Termites can literally gobble up your house and leave you homeless. Call (32) 867-9797 or visit the website at www.sentricon.com and find out why Sentricon is being used to protect the White House, the US Statue of Liberty, some Philippine historical sites, and millions of homes and properties across America, Europe and Asia.

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REALESTATE

Editor Cesar D. Mangawag

All Juan wants for shelter is decent, low-cost house

By Tessa R. Salazar

WHEN ordinary Filipinos are asked to visualize their dream house, they do so on Spartan, and not along Utopian lines. Ask a Filipino what his dream house is and he will never describe you the mothballed Boracay mansion.

Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council Chair Michael Defensor, during a visit to the World Building exposition in mid-March, stressed this observation before construction experts and foreign investors who attended the exposi-

Simple dream

Said Defensor: "Our people do not hanker for a three-car garage house. For them, a place to put the doormat down would be enough. They do not clamor for jacuzzis, that running water would be fine for them. They do not dream of a den. A sala that can double as a video parlor in the evening and a bedroom at night would be perfect. He was quick to add, however, that the simple dream doesn't mean that these people should be provided "fragile" and "rickety matchboxes."

He stressed that function, economy and esthetics can be fused even in a low-cost house. "What I have described are simple specs for a simple house. If we cannot help the ordinary Pinoy own one, then we stand indicted before the bar of his-



ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

tory for being so utterly helpless in making them realize a simple wish."

Accessible loans

Meanwhile, Sen. Francis Pangilinan stressed that loans must not only be accessible, but must be affordable through "nonmarket-based interest rates that would be realized through suitable subsidies." He added how these must also have rational, as well as creative payment schemes, conscious of market-based realities.

Said Pangilinan: "For a typical Filipino family, the home will be the biggest investment of their lives. For the fortunate few who have houses of their own, an abode offers a safe haven, a home and a source of pride. For the majority that remain without decent housing, a home remains an elusive dream and the contin-

uous deprivation of roofs over their heads fuels disillusionment, hopelessness and anger."

Pangilinan described how his newly married parents in 1956 took out a loan to purchase their first home, which was a small two-bedroom bungalow in Philamlife Homes, Quezon City. He related how the monthly payments were spread out over a 20-year period at P156 a month.

A good deal?

"You might think, what a good deal. Those were the days. But P156 a month was a lot of money for a struggling engineer-builder and his public school teacher wife," he quipped. Pangilinan went on to say that his mother earned P100 a month and she took the bus daily to Padre Faura where she taught at the

UP Preparatory High School. After just five years and four children, his parents could no longer afford the monthly payments. Pangilinan said that before he was born, they had to give up their home, take whatever money they could get from it, and move to the then more affordable cogen areas of UP Village where he was born.

"If the payment scheme on my parents' first house had considered the likelihood of a progressive increase in income and had instead started out with smaller payments up front and then, progressively larger payments with the passage of time, increasing in step with projected business and career growth, I am sure my folks would have been able to keep that first home," he said.

Residential condo sector recovery seen after 2002

By Raul C. Dancel

STILL weighed down by a supply glut from its boom years, the residential condominium sector is not expected to recover until after next year.

"Vacancy in the residential condominium sector continues to increase, as the supply situation remains a concern. While there are attractive pockets of opportunity, property professionals generally agree that the market will not begin to return until after 2002," property consultant FPD Savills Philippines Inc. said in a recent report.

Excesses

FPD Savills said the property sector had yet to make up for its excesses following the 1995-1998 boom, a period "when the market would snap up units as fast as property developers could print their preselling brochures."

During that period, projects became increasingly ambitious. Major developers started with small studio or one-bedroom units that upper middle-class wage earners could afford and eventually moved to building the country's first \$1-million luxury apartments.

When the 1997-1998 Asian financial crisis struck, everything fell apart. The suddenness of the financial crisis left numerous developers unprepared. Suddenly, developers were stuck with condominium units that nobody wanted.

Vacancies

FPD Savills said vacancies would continue to be a problem for developers of residential condominiums, especially with their tendency to build more despite weak demand.

"The supply situation will be further accentuated by the completion of other residential projects situated in existing and emerging urban developments in the metropolis, as investors continue to wait for prices to fall further and expect to pay record lows," it said.

Still falling

With too much supply in the market, rents are forecast to go down by 10 to 15 percent, especially those outside the luxury segment.

FPD Savills expects rents to continue falling, bottoming out only in the latter part of 2003.

It expects rents in Makati to stay at P260 per square meter, while those in Ortigas are seen fetching about P210 per square meter.

Flexible terms

According to FPD Savills "Given current trends, we expect to continue flight to newer developments as rental levels of new developments come close to levels in existing stock. To retain and attract tenants, landlords have shown increased flexibility in lease terms and conditions. Downward pressure on rents will ease either when the rental stock decreases, as investors and landlords start to sell or as demand increases. In reference to these, it seems unlikely that rents will rise in the very near future."

FPD Savills is the trading name for the principal property services subsidiaries of Savills plc, a UK company with a full listing on the London Stock Exchange. Founded in 1855, the business is one of the leading firms of international property consultants and real estate agents in the world.

Defensor to lead Youth Build construction in Muntinlupa

By Charles E. Buban

HOUSING Secretary Michael Defensor will lead some 15,000 youth volunteers in launching Youth Build 2002 all over the country. On April 15 he will be in Muntinlupa City, one of the 23 sites nationwide where houses will be built under the Habitat for Humanity project.

Says Defensor: "This is the culmination of a nationwide youth mobilization that started early this year. What's more exciting is that we are doing this for three years now wherein youths from all sectors actively involve themselves in eliminating poverty housing in the country."

Poverty housing refers to substandard or poorly built shelter units that many Filipinos are forced to avail in order to meet their housing requirements. Among the developing countries, the Philippines has

one of the highest housing requirements—around 3.6 million units from 2001 to 2004.

Defensor will be joined by his fellow Spice Boys, presidential daughter Lulu Arroyo, and Executive Secretary Ben Romulo, Penshoppe Youth Council and MTV Asia.

250 houses

With this year's theme "Today's Builders... Tomorrow's Leaders," Youth Build 2002 is expected to build around 250 houses between April and June. These houses will be built at 23 sites located across the country.

Says Margie Moran-Florencia, Youth Build 2002 steering committee chair: "We would like to instill in our youth the values of giving and sharing with the less privileged. We want our youth to learn about the importance of social responsibility. What we are creating here are future leaders. Their volunteering

spirit would further deepen their involvement not only in fund raising but in mobilizing other individuals to join them in this worthwhile endeavor."

Joining her in the committee are Defensor, Sen. Francis Pangilinan, businessmen Fernando Zobel de Ayala and Don Pedro Roxas. This year's major sponsors include Caltex, Aegon, JPC Group of Companies, Ayala Group of Companies and Petron Foundation. Bernie Liu of Penshoppe and Oxygen brands of apparel has created the Penshoppe Youth Council that tied up with MTV Asia to cover the event on selected sites.

Continuing affair

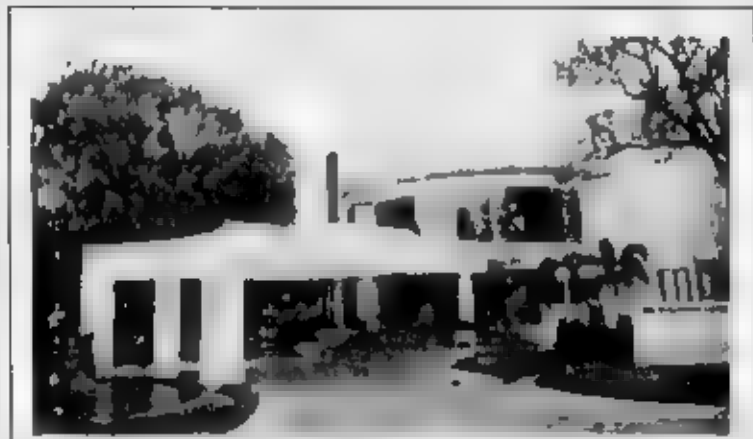
Youth Build is another project of Habitat for Humanity Philippines wherein a younger set of volunteers is tapped. First instituted three years ago, Youth Build has paved the way for youth core groups that are

tasked to organize fund-raising and volunteering activities with Habitat affiliates. These groups composed of youths from different sectors were institutionalized and were recognized as a vital arm of Habitat Philippines.

The first Youth Build happened in year 2000, and has since been able to mobilize more than 20,000 youth volunteers who have built more than 500 houses across the country.

The success of Youth Build Philippines became an inspiration to Habitat International. Starting this year the event will also be replicated in 10 other Asian countries—Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, China, Korea, East Timor, Vietnam, Japan, Mongolia and Indonesia.

In addition, Global Village teams of more than 100 youths will be crossing borders during the Youth Build period.



ISO 9001 CERTIFICATION

The Meralco's Manuel M. Lopez Development Center, a state-of-the-art training and development center in Antipolo City, has been officially certified to the 2000 version of the ISO 9001 standard recently. Designed by centennial architect Philip H. Recto, the MMLDC is a cluster of five modern pristine-white buildings in a 10-hectare natural setting, with lush landscapings, full-grown fruit trees, footpaths, creeks, bridges and ponds. It is now the preferred venue of top corporations and blue chip companies for their human resource development courses.

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Creba sets taxation seminar

TAXATION on real property transactions and holdings will be the theme of a four-hour seminar-workshop to be conducted on Thursday at the Asian Institute of Management in Legaspi Village, Makati.

Sponsored by the Chamber of Real Estate and Builders' Associations Inc. (Creba), the seminar-workshop is accredited under the Continuing Education Program required by the Bureau of Trade Regulations for Consumer Protection of the Department of Trade and Industry for licensed real estate service practitioners.

Topics will include income tax on corporation versus joint venture on unregistered partnership,

ordinary asset versus capital asset, property dividend, merger or consolidation, installment sales, sale of principle residence; withholding tax, transfer taxes, value-added tax, documentary stamp tax and local taxes.

Presenter will be lawyer Victorino C. Mamatateo, senior tax consultant, Punongbayan and Araullo, and former assistant commissioner, Assessment and Special Operations Service of the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

The seminar-workshop is part of a series of pre-convention events ushering in the Creba-HUDCC national convention in Baguio City on Oct. 24-26.



CAMBRIDGE TOWN SHOWROOM

Housing developer Empire East Land Holdings Inc. recently opened two showrooms—one on the fifth floor of SM Megamall and another on the third floor of SM North EDSA—for its latest Cambridge Town residential township project in the Pasig-Cainta area. The showrooms also serve as sales offices and feature model units and scale models of the entire 7.4-hectare project. At the heart of the project is an efficiently planned and affordably priced two-level, two-bedroom condominium home.

LIFESTYLE

Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

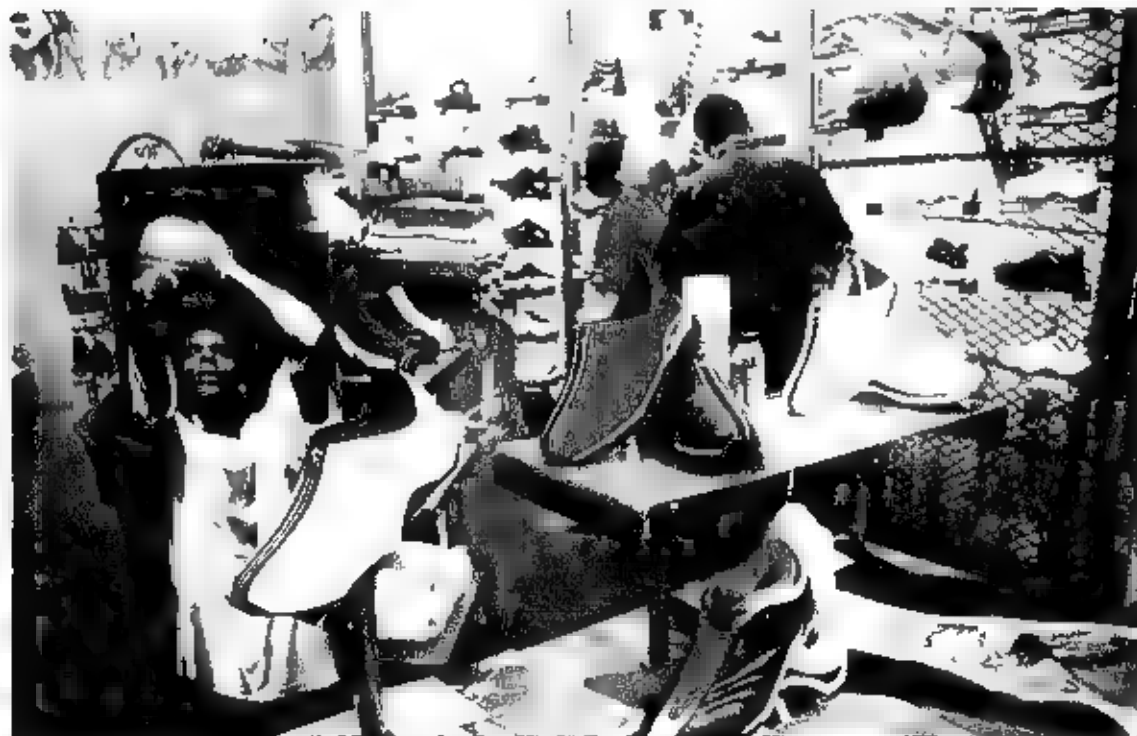


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JAPAN'S No. 1 golf line at Bridgestone Golf

A podium for those who want to be fashionably fit

By Cathy Babao Guballa
Photos by Romy Homillada

THE VIEW from the treadmill at one gym looks tempting. Café Breton, Casa Armas, Starbucks, UCC Vienna Café, Melo's Steak Factory and Pagliacci—these new restaurants and cafés stare up at those trying to sweat the unwanted pounds off. The restaurants are part of The Podium, the newest upscale mall to make its home in the bustling Ortigas Center, and if they appeal to the appetite, sports and fitness buffs don't have to lose heart. The Podium inside is all the more irresistible for its fabulous fitness shops.

Walking into The Podium, a joint venture between SM Investments and Keppel Philippines Properties Inc., will feel like déjà vu for people who have been to the Pacific Place mall in Hong Kong. Arquitectonica (ARQ), a US-based firm known for its creative ability to design projects with memorable imagery and regional identity, designed the interiors of both malls. Among its design highlights are the grand entrance hall defined by a long curve of shop fronts and the skylight over the atrium—a simple grid curved into a roller coaster-like wave.

Spread over five levels, the sports and fit-

ness stores are designed to please all kinds of athletes and amateurs. Currently, there are four already open to sell to swimmers, runners, golfers and gym rats—Nike Park, Speedo, Arena, AND 1 and Bridgestone Golf.

A PODIUM p.65



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ALABANO BRANCH, 2nd Fl. Eusebio Street (Opp. First Street)
MINDANAO AVENUE BRANCH, 5th Fl. Eusebio St., Mindanao Ave., C.D.
Cebu HOLLISTER, 5th Fl. Eusebio St., Cebu City, Cebu City
PAMPANGA CLINIC, C.D. 1st Fl. 212 B. Pampanga St.
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Quarterly Draw	Date	Prizes
1st Quarterly Draw	January 25, 2002	1st Prize: 1kg. Thea Pad 1500g 2nd Prize: 1kg. 850g. Mobile Phone with SIM Card 3rd Prize: Palm Pilot 1450g Consolation: 1kg. 400g. Cereals from 1st e-Bank (P1,000.00 (10 per region))
2nd Quarterly Draw	April 19, 2002**	1st Prize: One (1) Toyota Revo-DLX 2nd Prize: One (1) Sony Mega ZS-6000 (29") TV 3rd Prize: Palm Pilot 1450g Consolation: 1kg. 400g. Cereals from 1st e-Bank (P1,000.00 (10 per region))
3rd Quarterly Draw	July 26, 2002	1st Prize: 1kg. Thea Pad 1500g 2nd Prize: 1kg. 850g. Mobile Phone with SIM Card 3rd Prize: Palm Pilot 1450g Consolation: 1kg. 400g. Cereals from 1st e-Bank (P1,000.00 (10 per region))
Grand Draw	December 25, 2002	1st Prize: One (1) Toyota Revo-SR 2nd Prize: One (1) Home Environment Footage 3rd Prize: 1kg. 400g. Cereals from 1st e-Bank (P1,000.00 (10 per region)) Consolation: 1kg. 400g. Cereals from 1st e-Bank (P1,000.00 (10 per region))

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Anesthesia made simple

By Rowena C. Burgos
Photos by Betsy Johnson

If you are faced with the possibility of needing surgery in the future, chances are, you will need some type of anesthesia to go along with it. Which one you will need depends on a variety of factors, such as the type of surgery you are having and your state of health. Some surgical procedures require only an injection of local anesthesia into the incision area. Other procedures cannot be performed unless you are completely anesthetized—unconscious and unaware of pain.

In the recently launched book, "Local and Regional Anesthetic Blocks Made Simple," Doctors Jim P. Sanchez Jr., Joselito S. Balingit and Richard McCutcheon focus on two types of anesthesia: local and regional. By addressing this topic, the authors hope that readers will have a better understanding of what happens to them while they're anesthetized and perhaps make it a little less mysterious.

Although in general, it's more comfortable for the patient and surgeon to perform certain surgical procedures under general anesthesia, there are situations wherein local or regional anesthetic blocks are preferred.

"General anesthesia may endanger the lives of patients with heart disease or pulmonary edema. And there are patients who are scared of being put to sleep so the doctor blocks the nerves and does the surgery while the patient is awake," says Dr. Sanchez, plastic surgery consultant of St. Luke's Medical Center, Capitol Medical Center, Philippine Heart Center, Philippine Children's Medical Center and AFP Medical Center.

"Local and regional anesthetics are for patients who cannot afford hospital expenses. The cost of surgery becomes less because one need not spend for anesthetic gas, pre-operative work-up like ECG, chest X-ray and extensive lab exam," says Dr. Balingit, plastic surgery consultant of Far Eastern University NRMF Medical Center and AFP Medical Center.

Dr. Balingit cites hand injury as an example. A doctor can block the nerves that give sensation to the hand along the risk area. The whole hand becomes numb so surgery can be performed right there and then. The patient need not be hospitalized.

Simplified

In "Local and Regional Anesthetic Blocks Made Simple" (which is available at Goodwill Bookstore outlets), the blocks are presented by areas or regions and the procedures are shown through over 160 illustrations and 200 clinical photographs.

"Other books on this topic are so complicated for most practicing doctors. In this book, a doctor can take a look at illustrations of a certain procedure in 10-15 minutes and then



DR. Joel Balingit (left) and Dr. Jim Sanchez, authors of "Local and Regional Anesthetic Blocks Made Simple"



DR. William Magee and his wife Kathleen, founders of Operation Smile and mentors of Dr. Balingit and Dr. Sanchez, pose with Dr. Sanchez's daughter, Camille.

perform the surgery or block. This also includes refinements and techniques which have been developed over the years," says Dr. Balingit. "The book is made simple that even a medical intern can use it and practice the techniques," Dr. Sanchez adds.

Surgeons, dermatologists, anesthesiologists and family medicine doctors will benefit from this book, which also emphasizes the importance of being a well-rounded physician. "There is a tendency for some surgeons to do short cuts and proceed to giving local anesthesia and do the surgical procedure," the doctors state in the book's preface.

"Our goal is to share our knowledge on anesthetics and not to compete with anesthesiologists. What we're presenting here is an atlas of techniques so the patient can make an informed decision," says Dr. Balingit.

Side effects and complications related to local anesthesia, blockade technique and clinical conditions that may arise during performance of nerve blocks are discussed by Dr. McCutcheon.

For Doctors Sanchez and Balingit, who are also the authors of "Oriental Rhinoplasty: A Logical and Systematic Approach," anesthesiology is an exciting and challenging field because of the continuous development of new drugs, new types of operations and equipment.

With the book hopefully comes the possibility of making the experience a little safer and easier for most people.

Email the author at rburgos@inquirer.com.ph

Diabetes info drive launched in rural areas

THE ASSOCIATION of Municipal Health Officers of the Philippines (Amhop) has launched an intensive nationwide information campaign on effective diabetes prevention and control, called "Operation Diabetes," on the occasion of the recently concluded Amhop National Convention held in Mandaluyong City.

Amhop is an organization composed of public health doctors who run the country's more than 1,400 municipal health centers and form the backbone of the country's public healthcare delivery system.

Operation Diabetes involves the active participation of public health workers and community health volunteers in disseminating information on the prevention, complications and cost-effective management of diabetes especially in rural areas. Activities will also include symposia, further training of public health workers and volunteers, and strengthening of diabetic community support clubs.

Amhop members have been particularly concerned with the need, especially for the underprivileged sectors of the population, to receive adequate information on the prevention and control of diabetes. It is because diabetics belonging to these sectors have difficulty meeting the costs of drugs and healthcare needed for effective control of the disease. This then leads to non-compliance of measures and prescriptions recommended by public doctors and public health workers.

Hence, Operation Diabetes is deemed to help a lot in

arresting the rising incidence of diabetes and help poor diabetics effectively cope with its life-long management.

Diabetes, which affects an estimated 5 million Filipinos, continues to be one of the country's top 10 killer diseases. It has been tagged as the "rich man's disease," but this no longer seem so as the incurable disease threatens over 10 million Filipinos who are at risk of acquiring it mainly due to improper diet, stress and inadequate exercise.

Afflicting and posing serious threat to a large majority of Filipinos, not to mention the economic burden that goes with it, such an alarming incidence of diabetes—which when left uncontrolled can lead to various serious complications like kidney and heart diseases, blindness and gangrene leading to amputations—need to be closely addressed.

At the helm of Operation Diabetes is Amhop president Dr. Quia Abad, most noted for spearheading the Magna Carta for Public Health Workers, who will head Operation Diabetes management committee to oversee the project's implementation especially in rural areas. Its full-time secretariat will be headed by Dr. El nor Roque, Healthcare medical training consultant.

Operation Diabetes is a joint project of Amhop and The Healthcare Enterprise, maker of the No. 1-selling anti-diabetic herbal supplement Chantania Ampalaya Health Drink, which is being endorsed by Amhop as cost-effective complement in the proper management of diabetes.

ICTSI administers free clinics in Tondo

SOME 1,000 urban poor families in Parola, Tondo stand to benefit from the ongoing free clinic conducted by International Container Terminal Services Inc. (ICTSI).

During the first two clinics in February, some 500 families had availed of the free medical and dental checkup. Five hundred more families trooped to ICTSI's free clinic last March.

Aside from checkups, the program also provides free medicines and measles vaccination for children.

Called Gamutan sa Pantalan: Handog ng ICTSI sa Mamamayan ng Parola, the program was spearheaded by the late Enrique Razon Sr., founding chair of ICTSI, in 1990. Since then, the program has become a quarterly community outreach activity of the company every year.

Enrique K. Razon Jr., ICTSI's chair and president, continued the elder Razon's program, institutionalizing it as among ICTSI's corporate social responsibility projects. "ICTSI is not only accountable to its shareholders, clients and government regulators, but also to the community within which we operate."

He added: "We are committed to behave fairly and responsibly and contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of our employees and their families, the local community and society at large."

Meanwhile, Evelyn P. Lozada, human resources development senior manager and program proponent said, "We are happy with the turnout of families who have availed of our free clinic program in February. Every year, residents of Parola have been looking forward to this activity."

The Parola urban poor community is lo-



FREE clinic for ICTSI neighbors. Some 1,000 urban families in Parola, Tondo benefit from International Container Terminal Services Inc.'s free clinic program.

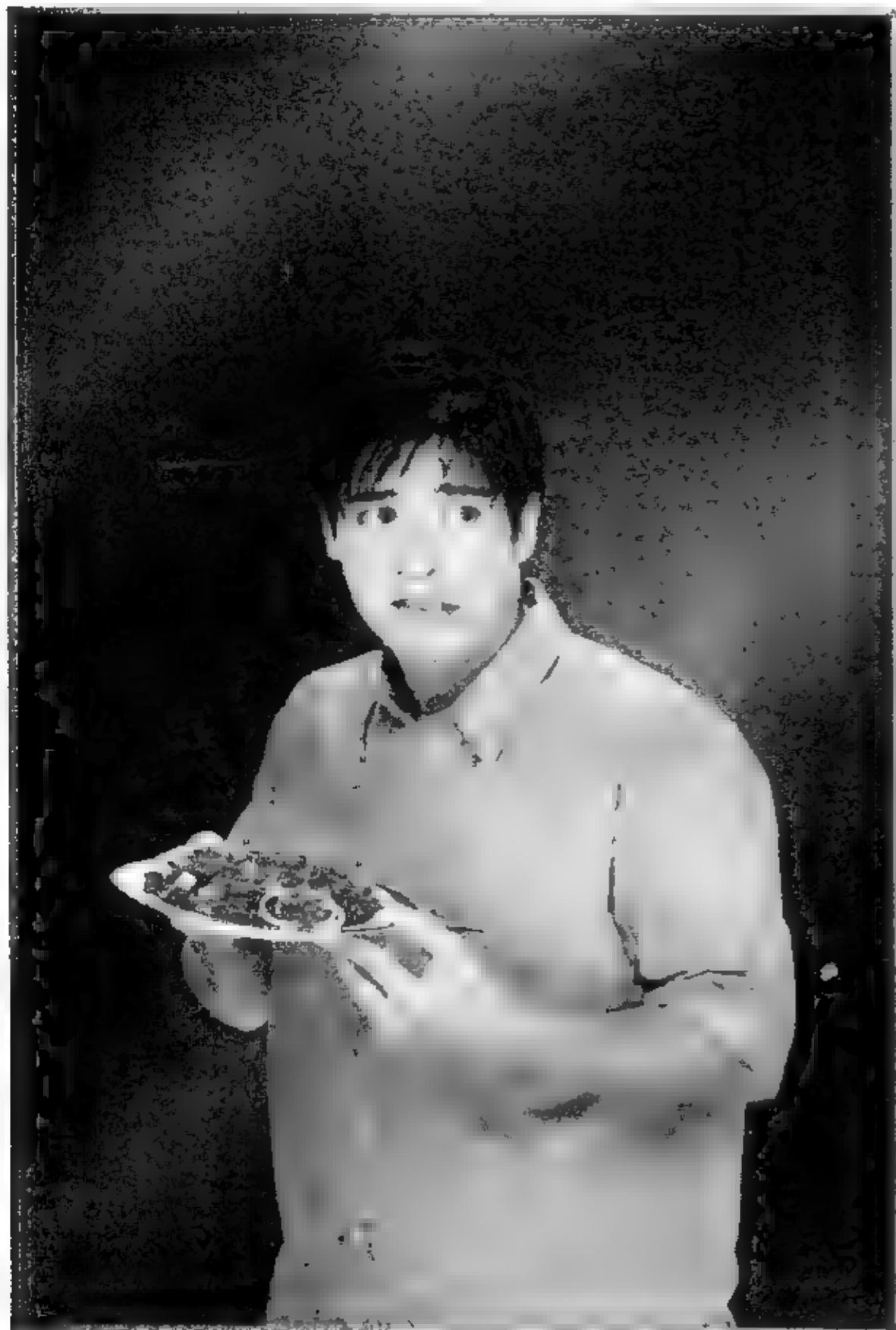
cated at the access road to the Manila International Container Terminal, operated by ICTSI.

"Being our closest neighbor, it's but right and fitting to have Parola residents as the first beneficiaries of our corporate social responsibility agenda," Lozada said.

Judith G. Villanueva, HR health and welfare officer, is the program organizer, while Raul S. Venturina, community relations manager, coordinated with the barangay officials of Parola. In-house doctors, Dr. Zinia D. Perez, physician, and Dr. Al Pestano, dentist, administered the medical and dental consultations, respectively.



PAROLA mothers and children troop to the stations of Doctors Al Pestano and Zinia Perez, in-house dental and medical consultants of ICTSI, for a free medical-dental checkup.



Nightmare death that victimizes only Filipinos

IN LIGHT of the sudden death of popular young actor, Rico Yan, last week, many people have asked me about *bangungot*, which was the reported cause of his death. There was no sign of foul play or presence of drugs, except for a very insignificant quantity of alcohol in his body. I was out of town when 5 persons, including a well-known movie actress, informed me about his death. Two television companies wanted to interview me on *bangungot*; several asked questions through e-mail.

The questions they asked were: What really is *bangungot*? Is it the same as nightmare? Is it true, as one elementary teacher said to us, that its English translation is "pancreatitis"? Is it true it only happens to Filipinos? Where do souls of *bangungot* victims go? Are they wandering about or trapped somewhere? Why can't a person having *bangungot* move? Has anyone survived an attack of *bangungot*?

First and foremost, I'd like to state clearly here that I do not know whether what happened to Rico Yan is a case of *bangungot*. I have no way of verifying that, so I will speak only in general terms here.

I remember a study made many decades ago by Filipino doctors showing that those who died of so-called *bangungot* suffered from acute pancreatitis brought about by eating a heavy meal consisting mostly of carbohydrate-rich foods such as rice and corn. Whether anyone whose stomach was empty also died of acute pancreatitis was not indicated in the report, as far as I can recall.

There is also something that the doctors discovered in the study. They observed that only Filipinos (and rarely Indonesians and Vietnamese) suffered from the same strange illness. These are people whose diet includes a heavy dose of rice or carbohydrate-rich foods.

But I believe there is more to *bangungot* than a simple case of acute pancreatitis. There is another way of looking at the phenomenon.

Beyond medical science

For this alternative explanation, we have to look beyond western medical science and search the answer in the fields of parapsychology, Eastern religious teachings about the astral body, witchcraft and sorcery.

According to Eastern religions, man is composed not only of mind, body and spirit, but of 7 bodies or vehicles. One of these is called the "astral body" or the etheric double. In the evening, the astral body may travel far out of the physical body and can even be seen at times by a clairvoyant person. There are several realms or planes of existence in the astral world, from the most refined and beautiful state similar to what Christians call "heaven," to the most frightening lower astral regions equivalent to "hell" in the Christian religion.

According to Eastern esoteric teachings, there is a lower region in the astral world called the "phantasmagoric plane" consisting of monster-like and other ugly creatures. They try to pull down or snatch the astral bodies that venture into or lose their way into their realm. That's when the problem begins. A struggle takes place between these negative entities and the sleeping person who now feels he is dreaming. Since he is out of his body, he can't move. He shouts, but no sound comes out of him, except a loud eerie moan. If no one wakes him up in time, his heart stops and he dies. What lures a sleeping person to this lower region, no one knows.

I suspect that a negative attitude or negative emotion may create the right vibration or energy for his astral body to connect to the negative forces of the lower astral planes. But many of those who died of *bangungot* appear to be in high spirits before they slept, the same thing with Rico Yan, as reported by his friends. What then lured his astral body to the lower regions? Perhaps they are happy on the

INNER AWARENESS

Jaime T. Licaucio



outside but sad on the inside.

A radio listener of mine named Jester e-mailed me a foreword from a book written by American mystery writer Eric Stanley Gardner of "Perry Mason Mysteries" fame regarding *bangungot*, which he calls "nightmare deaths." I quote here some relevant portions from that foreword.

"I first heard of these deaths when I was attending one of Captain Frances G. Lee's seminars on homicide investigation at the Harvard Medical School in Boston. Dr. Milton Helpert, the famous forensic pathologist of New York, was lecturing there and remarked that it was not always possible to determine the cause of death. He cited as an example that he had recently been called upon to examine vital organs from bodies sent him from the Hawaiian islands, and that in each case it had been impossible to discover a cause of death. There was no sign of poison, the heart, lungs, brain, kidneys and all of the vital organs were in perfect working order.

"These men simply had ceased to live, and medical science was powerless to find out why they had ceased to live.

"Driven by intense interest, I finally went to Honolulu and tried to find out about these strange deaths. What I found amazed me. The deaths occurred only in young Filipino men who were in the prime of life and the best of health. These men invariably died at night, under circumstances indicating a nightmare. They would go to bed apparently in the best of spirits. During the night they would be heard moaning. Before help could reach them, they would be dead."

Survivors of 'bangungot'

It is interesting to note that there are also cases of apparent *bangungot* victims who have survived, but there are very few of them.

Continues Eric Stanley Gardner: "I was able to find only one instance of a man who had made a recovery, and it is, of course, impossible to determine whether his experience was the same as that of the men who had died.

"This man was sleeping in a room that he had shared with a young, alert and very muscular Japanese. In the middle of the night the Japanese heard this Filipino emitting the peculiar moans associated with this dreaded type of death.

"Acting with rare presence of mind, the Japanese hurried himself physically upon the Filipino, as though coming to grips with an unknown force, and he succeeded either in awakening the Filipino from a nightmare while he was still alive or in fighting off the invisible forces of witchcraft, whichever you wish to believe.

"I manage to locate this Japanese. I interviewed him, photographed him, and secured not only his story but the story that had been given him by the Filipino after he had awakened from his all-but-fatal 'nightmare.'"

Concludes Gardner: "These nightmare deaths are tremendously interesting, and the fact that they exist at all is a challenge. It shows the need of giving more and more attention to legal medicine and of educating a greater number of forensic pathologists."

Since Eric Stanley Gardner wrote that foreword to his book, "The Case of Sunbather's Diary" in 1955, very little progress has been made in our knowledge of the cause of these nightmare deaths and their prevention. This should really pose a challenge to our medical researchers and forensic experts.

Address letters to this column to 308 Prince Plaza I, 106 Legaspi St., Greenbelt, Makati City or e-mail jlicaucio@geocities.com. Visit my new

website at <http://jlicaucio.tripod.com>. Listen to my daMM radio program every Sunday, 6-8 p.m.



Take Charge Doc!

Nicky S. Montoya, M.D.



Looking to learn more about your benefits under your MEDICard coverage? Do you want to be clear on the procedures, which allow you to avail of MEDICard's services? Get your information straight from MEDICard's Medical Director, DR. NICKY S. MONTOYA every Tuesday.

FAQs (frequently asked questions)

A few years back, I met an accident that required me to undergo surgery for internal bone fixation with metal bone plates and screws. MEDICard covered for the hospitalization and surgery, but not for the metal implants. Is this correct, why?

Yes, it is. Internal devices such as plates, screws and intermediary (IM) nails are not covered under the standard HMO program. These items are classified under corrective appliances together with artificial aids and prosthetic devices, which are part of the standard exclusions of coverage. That is why you had to pay for the metal plates and screws implanted.

Meet your MEDICard Team



Dr. Rosalia C. Campo has been a member of MEDICard's top-notch medical service providers for more than three years now. Today, she addresses the health needs of MEDICard members at the World City Medical Center (WCMC), the former QCMC. Dr. Campo, as she is to most, finished her degree in Medicine from UERMMMC. She later pursued residency training for her specialization in Pediatrics at Quezon City General Hospital. Her persistence, dedication and hard work has earned her a Diplomate degree to the Philippine Pediatric Society. She is also a member to the Philippine Medical Association and Manila Medical Society. Outside her clinical practice, she spends most of her time with family and friends. Visit Dr. Campo for your pediatric consultation needs at her clinic, room 210 of WCMC every Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 10 AM to 2 in the afternoon.

Contract Signing



PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER, the country's most read newspaper, signed its 11th year renewal of the healthcare agreement with MEDICard for the HMO program of its employees and dependents last April 03 at the Bayview Park Hotel. Present during the contract signing were (Sitting L-R) Mr. Jesse Francis Rabushkin (PDI Corp. HR Head), Mr. David Valdez (PDI Sr. VP-Corp. Services), Dr. Nicmar Montoya (MEDICard President) and Mr. Luis Montoya (MEDICard EVP & GM). (Standing L-R) Ms. Joy Mendola (MEDICard Asst. Supervisor, Marketing Services), Ms. Grille Gualtes (PDI Personnel Asst.), Ms. Thelma Parilio (PDI Performance Management Administrator), Ms. Rose Viray (PDI Compensation Management Head), Dr. Nicky Montoya (MEDICard Medical Director), Ms. Minam verasquez (MEDICard Asst. Manager Marketing Services) and Ms. Rachel Guico (PDI EBOC Coordinator).

We encourage all MEDICard members to voice out their concerns and issues at hand. **BE HEARD AND BE READ.** You can write DR. NICKY S. MONTOYA at 9/F Sagittarius Bldg. N.V. de la Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati City or e-mail him at montoya@medcardph.com. For feedback on availment of our services, e-mail us at sva@medcardph.com.

For inquiries on individual or family membership, dial 040-2020 local 2017 and look for Ms. Joy Mendola. For group or corporate membership, dial local 2049 and look for a membership consultant.

TEXT MEDICard for your queries: 0917-7518365 (Globe) or 0919-2476240 (Smart). Please don't forget to include your complete name and landline number where MEDICard could reach you. Log on to www.medicardph.com.

MEDICard is the first and only HMO in the Philippines and the whole Asian region to be ISO 9002 certified.



Shedding more light...

From page C3

pancreas," he says. "The organ doesn't regenerate, and no hospital in the country has the facilities to conduct transplants."

Real culprits

Just what does the pancreas do in a person's digestive system? Located near the stomach, the pancreas is responsible for secreting insulin and a number of potent enzymes that further help in our digestion. The food we eat is initially broken down in the stomach then goes to the small intestines where these enzymes do their work.

In some cases, however, the passageway connecting the pancreas to the small intestines is blocked. Instead of helping digest food, the trapped enzymes in the pancreas are activated and begin eating the organ itself, resulting in its necrosis.

And what obstructs the flow of these enzymes? Certainly not our obstructionist politicians, although their antics can also be life threatening in a totally nasty way. Rather, the real culprits are the gallstones produced by the gallbladder, an organ responsible for producing bile, which shares this passageway with the pancreas.

"Seventy percent of necrotizing pancreatitis is either caused by gallstones or alcohol," says Pangilinan. "Some people are stone-formers." A chemical imbalance in their bodies causes them to develop gallstones. We also see a trend among certain families, but we have yet to connect the development of gallstones with diet.

Having regular ultrasounds is one of the easiest and most reliable ways to detect the formation of gallstones. Undergoing an ultrasound has now become part of an executive exam, but it has yet to become a routine procedure in annual physical checkups. It's no guarantee, however, that one will be spared from necrotizing pancreatitis in the future.

No tell-tale signs

What's even scarier is it doesn't come with any tell-tale signs until it's too late. An acute attack is usually accompanied by severe and continuous stomach pain that radiates to the back. Surpris-

ingly, not all people who suffer from such severe stomach pain are roused from their sleep.

"There are plenty of what ifs surrounding Rico's death," says Pangilinan. "Of course, it would have immensely boosted his chances of surviving had the attack happened while he was awake. Doctors could have probably attended to him sooner."

If that were the case, however, there was little Pangilinan or any specialist could do to help Rico in remote Dos Palmas. "He needed to be airlifted immediately to Manila or the nearest hospital with an ICU equipped to handle such cases."

As for Rico's legendary snoring, the doctor has yet to hear of people dying directly from apnea, a condition wherein the body is unable to get enough oxygen during sleep.

"Either a person's tongue has fallen back or breathing has ceased temporarily," he says of apnea. "As soon as oxygen levels in the blood fall, the brain will automatically signal the lungs to inhale or move the respiratory muscles. Some people thus find themselves waking up in the middle of the night trying to catch their breaths."

The dreaded *bangungot*, he adds, isn't synonymous to pancreatitis. Majority of the victims—young, healthy men between the ages of 25-40—die in their sleep because of irregular electrical impulses in the heart.

"I'm not talking about coronary heart disease that commonly afflicts older people," he says. "When the heart's electrical system becomes erratic, it causes the heart to beat irregularly. That's the more common cause of *bangungot*."

Pangilinan is also unable to explain why *bangungot* is prevalent among young, Southeast Asian men, particularly of Malay descent. "One theory is it's more common for us [Malays] to develop stones," he says.

In the absence of any conclusive piece of evidence linking *bangungot* to any of these theories, Rico and those before him who died of the fatal condition have taken its secrets to their graves.

E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph



Healthy women do jiggle

THE TITLE above is not mine. It's a phrase that comes from a book called "The Fit or Fat Woman" by weight loss expert Covert Bailey. I was reminded of it when, like many other people, I trooped off to the beach with my extended family to spend the Holy Week break.

We were about 30 people ranging from 4-year-olds to 60-year-olds. The below 18 girls are all involved in sports and the above-18 ladies are all gym regulars. In other words, relatively fit females of normal weight.

The reason I remembered the phrase "healthy women do jiggle" is because with the exception of pre-pubescent girls, all the women there (from teenagers upward) had a slight jiggle somewhere on their body. This "jiggling" is not obvious in street clothes but it can be seen in a skimpy bathing suit. In contrast, the men (even those who were slightly overweight and non-exercisers) hardly jiggled as they moved around.

The reason I am writing about all this jiggling and non-jiggling is to point out that women are really meant to have softer and more rounded bodies than men. A healthy body fat percentage for a man is approximately 9-15 percent of total body weight while for a woman it is 18-25 percent. Men have more muscle, less fat while women have less muscle, more fat.

Nature has made it this way because a woman needs an adequate amount of fat to be fertile (ovulation and menstruation don't usually start until a young girl has at least 15-17 percent fat), carry a pregnancy to term and breast-feed even in times when food is scarce. Even at 20 percent body fat, some areas of a woman's body will jiggle.

Writing about the hip and thigh area in his book, Bailey observes that "the buttock and thigh muscles may be quite firm, but most women, unless they are very young or have inherited thin legs and hips, carry a wiggling layer of fat in that area. Even super-athletic women—those who play professional tennis or run marathons—are not as solid in the hips and thighs as their moderately active male friends. This is simply part of being a woman."

Women with slim legs may not have jiggle thighs but they may have preps (back of the arms) that "wave" slightly when they wave at someone or little rolls of fat around the waist that are only obvious when they slouch in a seat. It is rare to find a woman who is completely firm in all the areas of her body. Even female bodybuilders cannot maintain their statue-like firmness the entire year. It

WELL AND GOOD

Tina Juan



is too taxing on their health to keep body fat levels low enough to have the leanness of a man.

Looking at the pre-pubescent girls in our family, my sister noted that they have the figure proportions of fashion models—thin legs, no hips, flat stomachs, narrow waists, etc. Pre-pubescent girls of normal weight don't jiggle because they have the body fat percentage of boys the same age. But when they hit puberty and estrogen starts flooding their bodies, their femaleness appears as fat in the breasts, lower abdomen, hips, buttocks and thighs. That's why the body of an average healthy woman jiggles.



ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

Models, meanwhile, are "genetic freaks." I don't say this in a disparaging way but simply to explain that they are not representative of the average woman. It is unrealistic to want to look like them.

It is also unrealistic to want to look like your favorite movie or music star because even they don't look the way they do in the movies or the magazines the way they really do in real life. What you see on screen and in print is largely an illusion created by makeup artists, hairstylists, fashion designers, favorable lighting and flattering camera

angles and filters. Facial and body flaws can be airbrushed or retouched via computers.

On our family's out-of-town trips, my mother likes to bring what she calls "toilet magazines"—imported gossip tabloids like the National Enquirer—for light reading while lounging around. One of the issues she brought had a 32-page spread on "How the stars really look." Much as I don't agree with the way the paparazzi aggressively stalk celebrities to photograph them off-guard, one beneficial thing they do is reveal that models and movie stars are just like you and me. They have their bad hair days, their skin doesn't always glow, their thighs have cellulite, their weight fluctuates up and down, etc.

So don't be so hard on yourself. No one really has a perfect body or even if they did, they wouldn't be able to maintain it forever (age catches up on everyone). It's important for your psychological well-being to have a healthy attitude toward your appearance. Improve what you can by exercising, eating right, choosing appropriate clothes for your figure, taking care of your skin, having plastic surgery if you feel you need to, etc. But gracefully (rather than grudgingly) accept what you cannot change, like your height, growing old and those areas of your body that jiggle in spite of everything you do.

The Association of Fitness Professionals of the Philippines (AFPP) will hold its Provincial Fit Tours in the following areas: Cebu (April 12-14, call Veronica Enriquez at [032] 234-1643 or e-mail fitadebu@mozcom.com), Cagayan de Oro (April 24-26, call Julie Ang at [088] 857-5416 or e-mail Shirley Queada at outfit@consultant.www.ph). The tour includes a two-day Basic Instructor Course and a one-day Fitness Workshop.

AFPP will also hold a Manila fitness seminar on April 20 at the Bahay ng Aumun, UP Diliman, QC. Topics will include Yoga, Aerobics for Kids, Thyroid Problems and Exercise, Sports Training for Basketball Players. Call Doris Rivera at 850-7647.

The Sports Medicine Association of the Philippines will hold its 11th Annual Convention titled "Global Trends and Local Issues in Sports" on May 17-18 at the Manila Midtown Hotel, Ermita. Call 521-9123, fax 522-2374 or e-mail sportsmedphj@yahoo.com.

For past articles and exercises, visit www.tinajuanfitness.com.

EXERCISE OF THE WEEK



Open leg reverse curl

STRENGTHENS the front and sides of abdominal muscles. This also challenges abdominal muscles to contract from bottom up rather than from the top down.

Equipment:
Exercise mat

Exercise technique:

1. Lie on your back with your arms in a "surrender" position, your legs lifted with knees over hips and open slightly wider than hip width.
2. Squeezing your abdominal muscles, use two slow counts to smoothly curl your buttocks off the floor.
3. Hold this position for four slow counts, breathing the whole time.
4. Take two slow counts to lower your buttocks to the floor.

Performance tips:

1. This is an advanced exercise.

2. All the movements in this exercise are done between the hip bones and ribcage. The legs should not be rocking back and forth.

3. Do not expect to lift the buttocks very high off the floor.

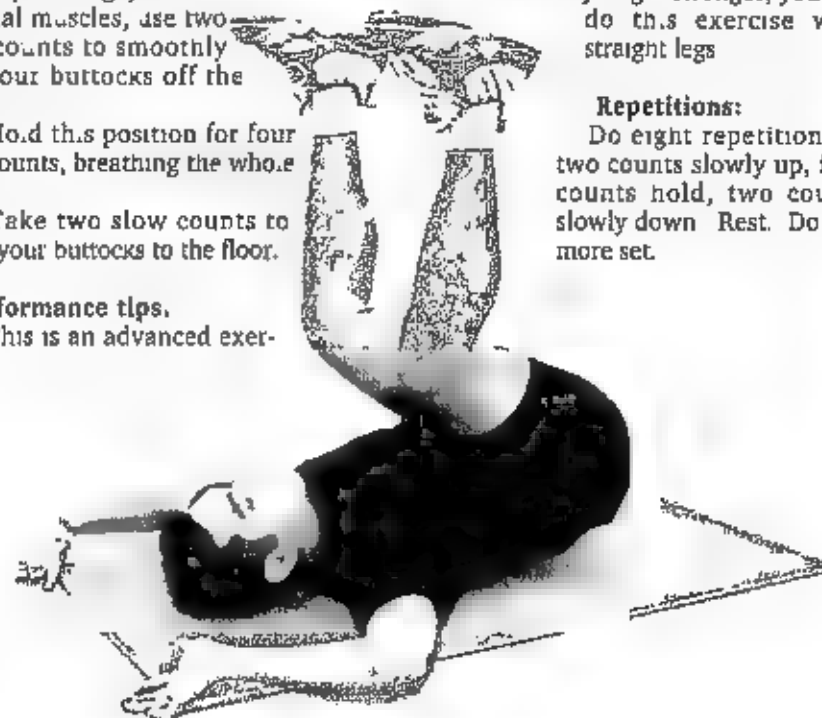
4. Move slowly. Avoid jerking the body to get the buttocks off the floor. Use the contraction in the abdominal muscles to do this.

5. If this bothers your lower back in any way, avoid this exercise.

6. As you get stronger, you can do this exercise with straight legs.

Repetitions:

Do eight repetitions of two counts slowly up, four counts hold, two counts slowly down. Rest. Do one more set.



Go for the gold with space-age equipment

GOLD'S Gym introduces introduces treadmills that let you run to the beat. At least 40 advanced treadmills with audio installations will be available only at Gold's. And the view isn't bad either. The treadmills overlook Gloria Park.

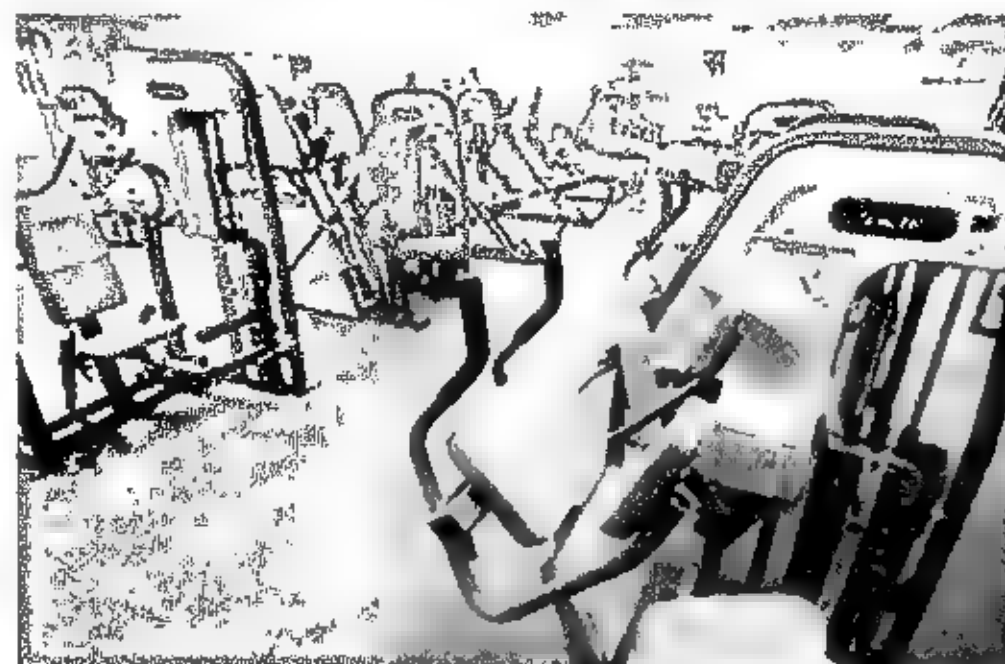
With three levels, Gold's Gym in Glorietta 3 at the Ayala Center is practically a workout roaming the 1,000-sq-m (at least) area occupied by premium fitness equipment from Nautilus, Plex, Paramount, Hammer, Strength, Iron Grip, etc.

The experience gets even better with first-class amenities. The gym is complete with 300 lockers, towels included, showers, steam and sauna facilities. Plus, some pleasing extras—health and juice bar serving wraps, sandwiches, salads, juices and even coffee, merchandise and pro shop complete with supplements and energy bars.

With all these excellent equipment and amenities, you might find yourself spending a little more time in the gym than you planned. Not to worry, Gold's Gym is open 6 a.m.-12 m. Call 752-8280.



GOLD's Gym Manila will be offering 100 group exercise classes weekly.



TOP-OF-THE-LINE equipment from Nautilus





LITTLE MERMAID WOULD LOVE THIS. Speedo shop at The Podium

A podium for those who want to be fashionably fit

From page C1

Golf, anyone?

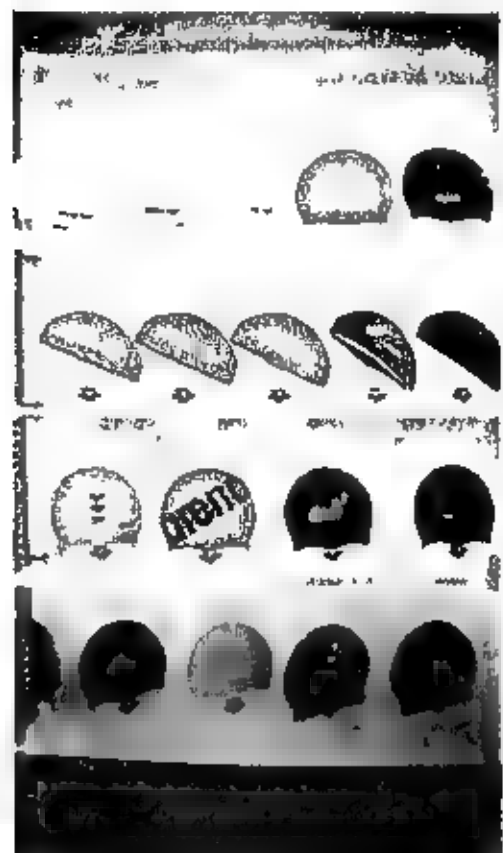
Green aficionados will delight in knowing that Bridgestone Golf has opened its first concept store in Manila at The Podium. Bridgestone is Japan's No. 1 golf brand due mainly to the success of their popular Tourstage, Precept, Newing, Paradiso and Reygrande golf lines. In the United States, the tremendous success of the Mcclady golf ball made Bridgestone a household name. On the Professional Golf Association (PGA) Tour, top professionals such as Nick Price, Tom Watson, Justin Leonard and Stuart Appleby represent Bridgestone. The golf store offers a complete range of golf clubs, apparel and accessories to fit all levels of golfers.

Basketball players and fans alike will enjoy looking over AND 1's cool and unique line of merchandise. Its "Trash Talk" T-shirt line, as popular as the reversible jerseys. Their line of basketball shoes includes the very popular and comfortable Postgame style shoes (no shoelaces) which made a huge impact on the footwear industry when they were introduced in 2000. Their Performance line of shoes boasts the claim that their shoelaces never fray or break. AND 1 carries sizes up to 14-15 and is a highly popular brand worldwide. Among the NBA athletes who are known to wear AND 1 shoes are Desmond Mason of Seattle SuperSonics, Darrell Armstrong of Orlando Magic, Kevin Garnett of Minnesota Timberwolves and Ben Wallace of the Detroit Pistons to name a few. Locally, Noy Castillo of Purefoods, Vince Hizon of Red Bull, Al Peek of Alaska Aces and Rich Alvarez of the Ateneo use and endorse AND 1 shoes.

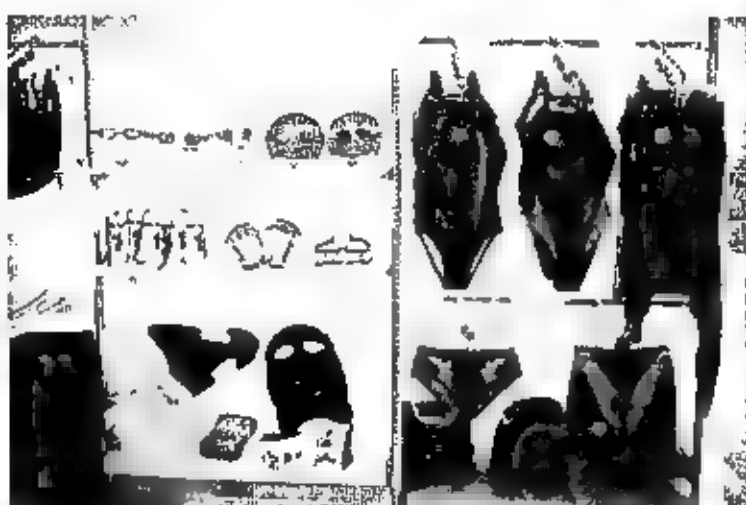
Waterworld

Swimmers, on the other hand, can take their pick of swimwear and accessories from two highly popular and reputable brands that also make their home at The Podium. Speedo and Arena have two large concept stores (located on separate levels) that present a full line of swimwear, swimming caps, goggles, fins and other gadgets to give the swimmer either a competitive or fashionable edge, depending upon the need.

Arena, an internationally acclaimed brand, covers a wide spectrum of sports apparel from swimming to fitness, triathlon to cross training. Its sport-engineered swimwear is particularly known for its "Spira" line and technology. The technology is anchored on reducing water flow resistance and achieving lightness in the water, while maintaining a body-form fitting feel. Arena caters to both competitive and leisure swimmers and offers swim accessories such as goggles, swim caps, body dry towels, hydraboards, pullbuoys, hand



ARENA swimcaps galore in latex and silicone



UNDERWATER ADVENTURE. Swimwear from Arena

Shopping till you drop the pounds applies here because they have fabulous stocks of sportswear and accessories

paddles, ear plugs and nose clips to complete the swimmer's needs and to provide the tools for a winning form.

Speedo has four major categories of merchandise. The Swimwear line is for training, competition and leisure in the water, the Beach line has products used for activities near or on the beach, Multi sport has products used for sporting activities other than swimming, and other equipment which is a line of products that aid and complement the other three categories mentioned. Speedo's most popular line is its swimwear, which is divided into three categories. The Training line has no lycra (the absence of lycra eliminates swimwear degeneration and adds drag to the suit that is beneficial for training, or so Speedo claims). The Competition line, on the other hand, has suits with more lycra and involves water dynamics. Its tighter material makes the swimmer skim through water and reduces the water drag. Silhouettes in this line lean toward those with back support for control and prevents straps from falling off the shoulders. Speedo also claims that their suits have low moisture absorption, is 75 percent faster than all other suits (Competition) and because of its low moisture absorption is quick-drying. Their men's line of water-shorts has the sand management system, which prevents sand and water from being trapped inside the garment, and a mesh lining that minimizes the ballooning effect. The shop also carries cute and colorful wetsuits that protect young children from UV rays. Speedo also carries a selection of goggles that are anti-fog and with UV filters as well as other swim gear like kickboards, paddles and buoys.

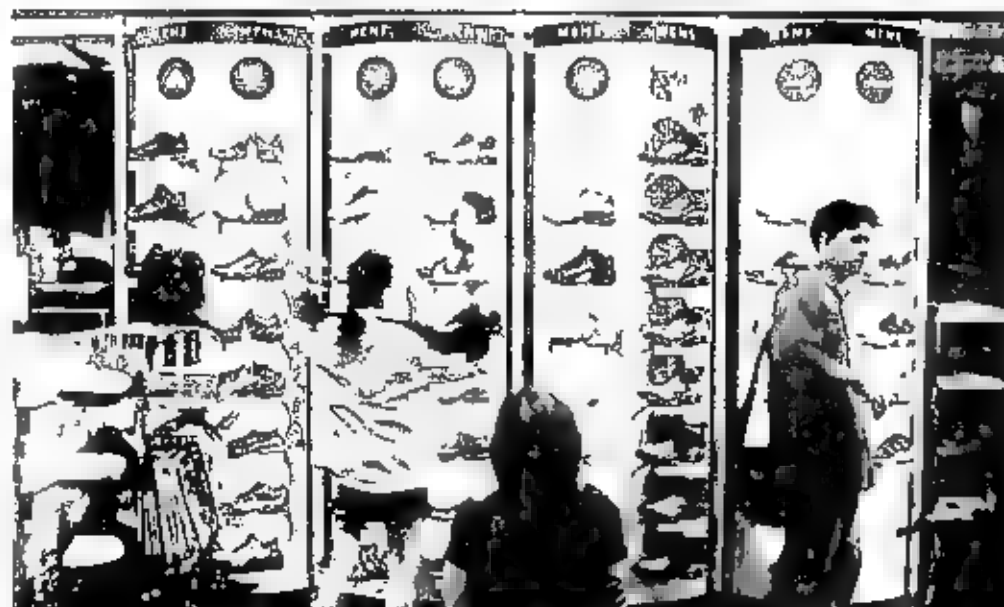
Just do it

Nike Park carries a full range of running, walking and cross-training gear—shoes, bags, socks, Nike timeware (watches specially designed for athletes at heart). There is also a golf collection endorsed by no less than Tiger Woods, with its full range of golf bags, shoes, gloves, apparel (men and women) sure to convert even non-golfers to donning them. The best part about this Nike Park shop is the collection of shoes available for men, women and children—running, walking, cross-training and even basketball shoes. Lined up against the wall in various colors and styles, they're a visual feast. Irresistible. Just do it! One walks out of the mall with a new pair of running shoes and an eagerness to try them out on the treadmill. Except for one problem: On the way out, the coffee and cheesecake beckon. The Podium, upscale and elegant, has temptation written all over it.

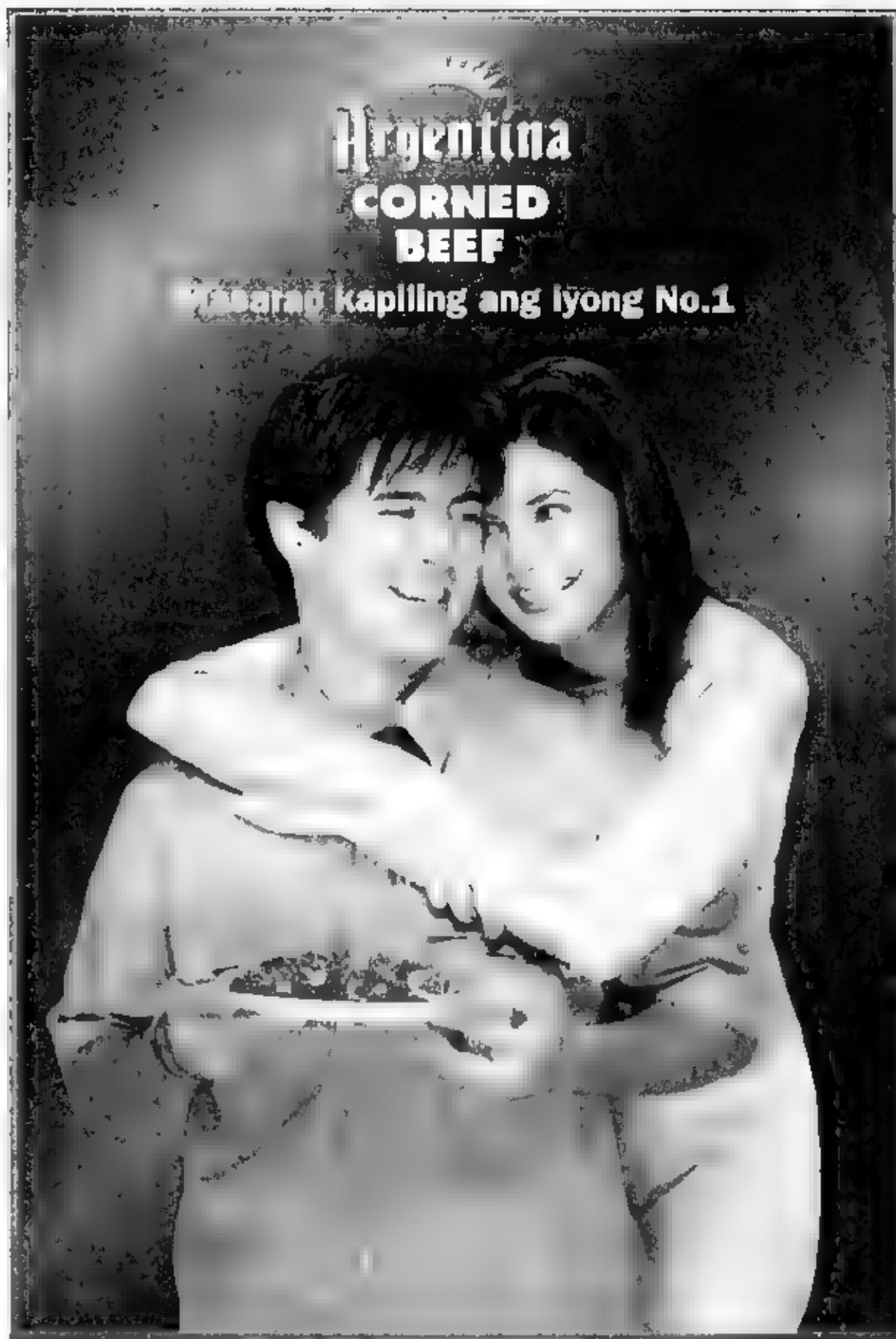
E-mail the author at cbguballa@inquirer.com.ph



NOT FOR MEN ONLY. Women and children's shoe line at Nike Park



JUST SHOE IT. Nike men's athletic shoe collection



Argentina
CORNE
BEEF

Kapiling ang Iyong No.1



SPA products from Bali Spa and Wellness Center

Almost Heaven

If you haven't been to a spa, you will not understand when habitues say it's paradise regained. But not all spas are created equal. The best spas are those that offer a full range of pampering in immaculately clean facilities. Oh, and let's not forget the scented oils, the luxurious salts, the refreshing mud-packs and all other ingredients that relax body and soul.

The Spa

A new branch at the Promenade, Alabang Town Center in Alabang, Muntinlupa, with its refreshing tropical theme, The Spa promises to give visitors the same pleasurable experience as its sister spa at Acropolis in Libis, QC where the interiors are European-inspired.

Aside from the rejuvenating massage therapies and remedial fitness programs that foster a sound mind and perfect physique, The Spa offers a wide variety of facial and body care services that are sure to pamper from head to foot: Ayurveda treatments from India, Citrus Body Polish and Purifying Clay Masque (also from Bali), Fango Mud Facial, direct from Terme de Montecatini Spa in Italy, and Phyto-mer Facial Marine cosmetics from St. Malo, France.

New treatments to look forward to include the New Northern Thai massage, Asian Foot

Therapy and Indian Head Massage, which will definitely soothe the senses and release the stress of modern living.

Also highlighting the list of The Spa's latest innovation is the world-renowned LCN Light Concept Nail. LCN primarily aims to facilitate treatment and restoration of stressed and dull nails.

A proud member of the International Spa Association (Isa), a prestigious organization representing over 1,400 spa and fitness facilities and providers worldwide, The Spa, opening soon in Bel-Air, Jupiter, spearheaded the advent of other top-flight fitness centers in the Metropolis since its establishment in 1996.

Call the Acropolis branch at 634-2848/2709/2473 or the Alabang branch at 850-3490/6836.

The Oriental Spa

Treat yourself and your loved one to a relaxing summer break with Mandarin Oriental, Manila's Spa Stay Package. The luxurious room package currently being offered at P4,988++ for a single occupancy and P7,988++ for a double occupancy, including such perks as a soothing spa treatment.

The invigorating treatments carefully selected to complement one's stay at Mandarin Oriental Manila include the following choices.

Swedish aromatic massage with steam bath, sports therapeutic massage, a combination of Chinese, Swedish and deep tissue techniques; Shiatsu acupressure massage, a traditional Japanese technique that involves the application of fingertip pressure to vital energy points of the body; aromatic salt glow that uses freshly ground aromatic sea salts to exfoliate the skin; royal foot spa or royal hand treatment (inclusive of steam bath) that include salt scrub and a manicure or pedicure involving a dip in melted warm wax paraffin.

Located atop the hotel, The Oriental Spa evokes elegant Thai style and luxury as reflected in its interiors and furnishings. Four stunning private suites—each with its own bath and steam facility complete The Oriental Spa's hushed and serene ambience.

Therapists who have been specially trained provide personalized treatments, to suit indi-



THAI interiors accentuate The Oriental Spa's treatment rooms.

vidual needs. The Oriental Spa uses the exclusive Thalgo line from France. It is operated by Sportathlon Philippines, which is under the management of the Spa of Siam.

Valid until the end of this year, the Spa Stay Package includes an overnight stay in a superior room complete with American breakfast, a welcome oriental drink, free pressing of one clothing, complimentary local calls, late checkout until 2 p.m. and a choice of one spa treatment.



A DOS Palmas guest enjoys a relaxing full-body massage.

Bali Spa and Wellness Center

The spa that has brought to town the legendary Javanese style of relaxation and beauty rituals also offers products that you can use for in-home pampering sessions.

Available at Bali Spa and Wellness Center are essential oils that come in a variety that include clove (good as anesthetic, antiseptic and general tonic for physical and intellectual weakness), patchouli for relaxation; lavender for calming; sandalwood for treating dry skin and relieving cystitis and infections; vetiver for relieving muscle tension, ylang-ylang for calming nerves and de-stressing, nutmeg for aiding the digestive system and stimulating circulation; and peppermint, the brain booster that also promotes relaxation.

Bali Spa also has the South Sea Mineral Salt Bath, which contains mineral salt and rosemary oil, that refreshes, eases muscle pains, prevents dizziness and promotes freshness.

For bathing, there are the bath gel of Javanese formula or scrubs such as cinnamon body scrub (rice powder extract, herbs and cinna-

mon) and Pandan Wangi body scrub (pandan wangi leaves and extract of rice-powder turmeric tumeric). The Tea Tree oil, with its antiseptic and antiviral qualities, makes for good massage oil for the feet and legs.

The Bali Spa is located at 318 Interior Gallery Building, 318 Alabang-Zapote Road, Las Piñas City. Call 800-3880/3816.

Tropical Spa

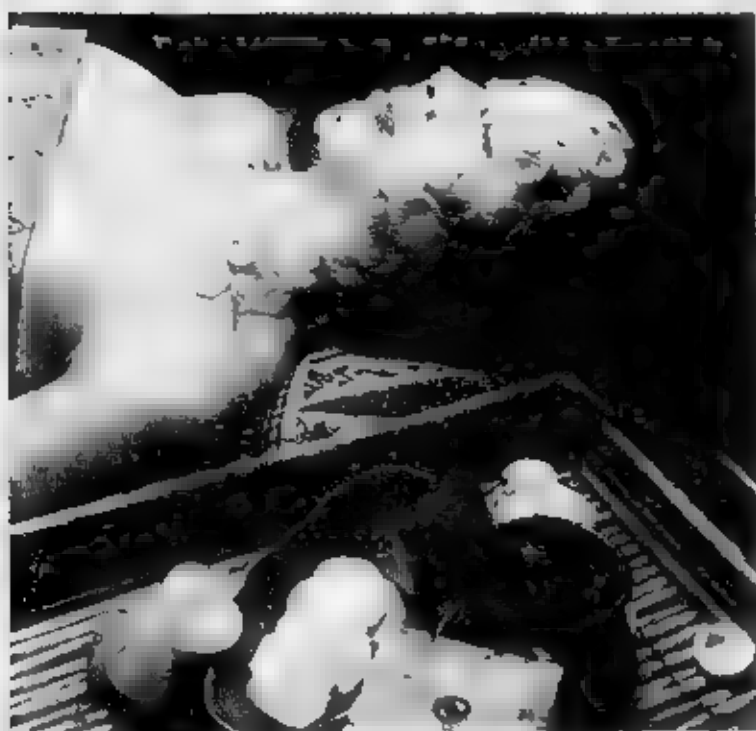
The reopened Dos Palmas Resort in Palawan offers a whole range of services to soothe the tired body and the battered mind through its brand-new Tropical Spa, the first complete spa facility in Palawan. Such as? Such as aromatherapy, slimming or Swedish full body; massage from the resort's trained therapists, aromatic facials, body scrubs (aptly called body smoothies), hair and scalp therapy, milk baths and foot spa treatments.

All these against a glorious backdrop of lush gardens and pristine blue waters, while you sip a long, cool drink and daydream the hours away.

Apart from such services, the Tropical Spa prides itself in using beauty and treatment products that are made only of 100-percent natural and fresh ingredients like aloe, cucumber, honey and oatmeal, and prepared just 5-10 minutes before the actual treatment. Furthermore, the cost of these treatments are 30-50 percent cheaper than those of other leading spas, with most services priced at P500 and below. Finally, all systems and procedures are patterned after those offered by world-class spas.

The full-service Tropical Spa is one of the main attractions of the newly renovated Dos Palmas resort. Located about an hour's boat ride away from the provincial capital of Puerto Princesa, Dos Palmas derived its name from the island's two 80-ft buri palms that tower over its coconut trees. The resort boasts of comfortable and modern amenities for tourists, including fully furnished bay cottages built on stilts over the island's surrounding waters, and garden cottages standing in the midst of more than 150 varieties of plants.

Apart from this, Dos Palmas offers a complete spectrum of recreational facilities, including a swimming pool with jacuzzi, a tennis court, a billiards den and a videoke bar, plus kayaks and snorkel gear for beach enthusiasts.



PAMPER yourself with one of Dos Palmas' aromatic facials.

Enchanted Kingdom

APRIL

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30

Our calendar of celebrations will keep you in the loop

...in April 9, a Tuesday, it's Mother's Day. And to celebrate the occasion, we're giving all our visitors the red carpet treatment. Simply present your Mother's Day card, upon entry and get free return tickets plus a chance to win a "Lucky Visitor of the Day." Now that's an April celebration you'd be a fool to miss. All returns in the form of a letter and are valid until April 10, 2002 only.

RED LETTER DAY

The healer in us all

By Cory Quirino

THERE lives in each of us a healer waiting to be discovered, waiting patiently to heal the self and, ultimately, the world. This is the mission of pranic healing, both the science and the art.

Master Choa Kok Sui, a Filipino of Chinese descent and chemical engineer by profession, was interested in yoga, mysticism and Chinese Ki Kung (the art of generating internal power) at a very young age. He spent more than 18 months studying the esoteric sciences while searching for alternative ways to ease human suffering.

Learning the secrets of healing from gurus and master healers, he founded the Institute for Inner Studies, through which he passes on to his students what he has learned. To date, there are more than 13,000 graduated pranic healers in the Philippines plus thousands more in Southeast Asia, Europe and the USA.

Ancient art

Pranic healing (PH), also called medical qigong, magnetic healing, laying of the hands or charismatic healing, is an ancient art. It utilizes prana or ki to heal the physical body. Prana or ki is the life energy that keeps the body alive and healthy. In Greek, it is known as *pneuma*; in Hebrew it is called *ruah*.

The human body is made up of the visible physical body and the invisible energy (bioplasmic) body. This energy body penetrates and extends 4-5 inches beyond the physical body. Clairvoyants who can see auras call this the etheric body or etheric double.

All human beings have what is called the power of the self, which can generate the energy from life. The process of pranic healing allows the "transfer" of the energy from any of several sources: solar (sun), ground (earth) and air (prana), to the person being healed. Thus, without the benefit of surgery or medication, the victim is healed, thereby earning the label miraculous healing.

Vehicle

I was a vehicle of sorts for the incredible healing of Caro, (not her real name), an 18-year-old battling the last stages of lupus. Her mother, in a moment of des-



Sr. Lydia Cabornay receives her award together with two senior pranic healers of the World Pranic Healing Foundation, Faith Saway and Hermie Corcuera.

peration, asked me if I knew a healer because her "daughter needs help for the doctors have lost all hope of curing her." In short, she was on her deathbed. Immediately, I called the Pranic Healing Center and asked for a healer to drop by the hospital. They sent what I would consider a senior healer. She spent a total of 20 minutes with Caro, who was nearly comatose. The healer simply raised her hand 15 ft. away from the patient and proceeded to "sweep" and then "energize."

The very next morning, an exhausted but happy mother called me to give thanks. In less than 24 hours her daughter was pronounced out of danger.

A miracle?

It is not the intention of PH to replace orthodox medicine, although its role is to enhance healing by complementing orthodox medicine. This is the reason more and more doctors are becoming pranic healers.

Dr. Marie Rose Yabut, an ob-gyn at Cardinal Santos Hospital, said PH has "facilitated my work as an obstetrician, giving me more confidence and composure on the operating table." She used a technique in visualization that "facilitated the difficult delivery of my patient Marivic Ocampo and her baby boy."

Sr. Lydia Cabornay, a 63-year-old nun from the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception, recounted a campus ministry where a 19-year-old student complained of a headache. After a few minutes of simple healing,

the student's headache was gone.

After three sessions with the nun, a 20-year-old student who was sexually molested at age 8 and had trouble dealing with spiritual and emotional pain, changed her attitude. The victim has since forgiven her uncle and

Everyone has the power to tap energy from the sun, ground or air that can heal a sick person

has not resumed counseling. Flor S. Ravina, a 64-year-old assistant school division superintendent in Marikina, enrolled in a basic PH course together with 150 teachers last year.

At the Southern Tagalog Regional Athletic Meet in Sta. Cruz, Laguna, 50 students who complained of various ailments, from headache to fever to diarrhea, underwent healing sessions with some teachers. All experienced relief within minutes to an hour after the session.

Gloria Romulo, a 57-year-old homemaker was advised by her



PRANIC healing involves the transference of life energy (ki or prana) to the patient.

healing, Gloria, after having graduated from PH, practiced self-healing through a powerful visualization technique. What prompted her to self-heal was the onset of the flashing lights. After one year of self-healing she underwent an eye exam. Her retina was intact.

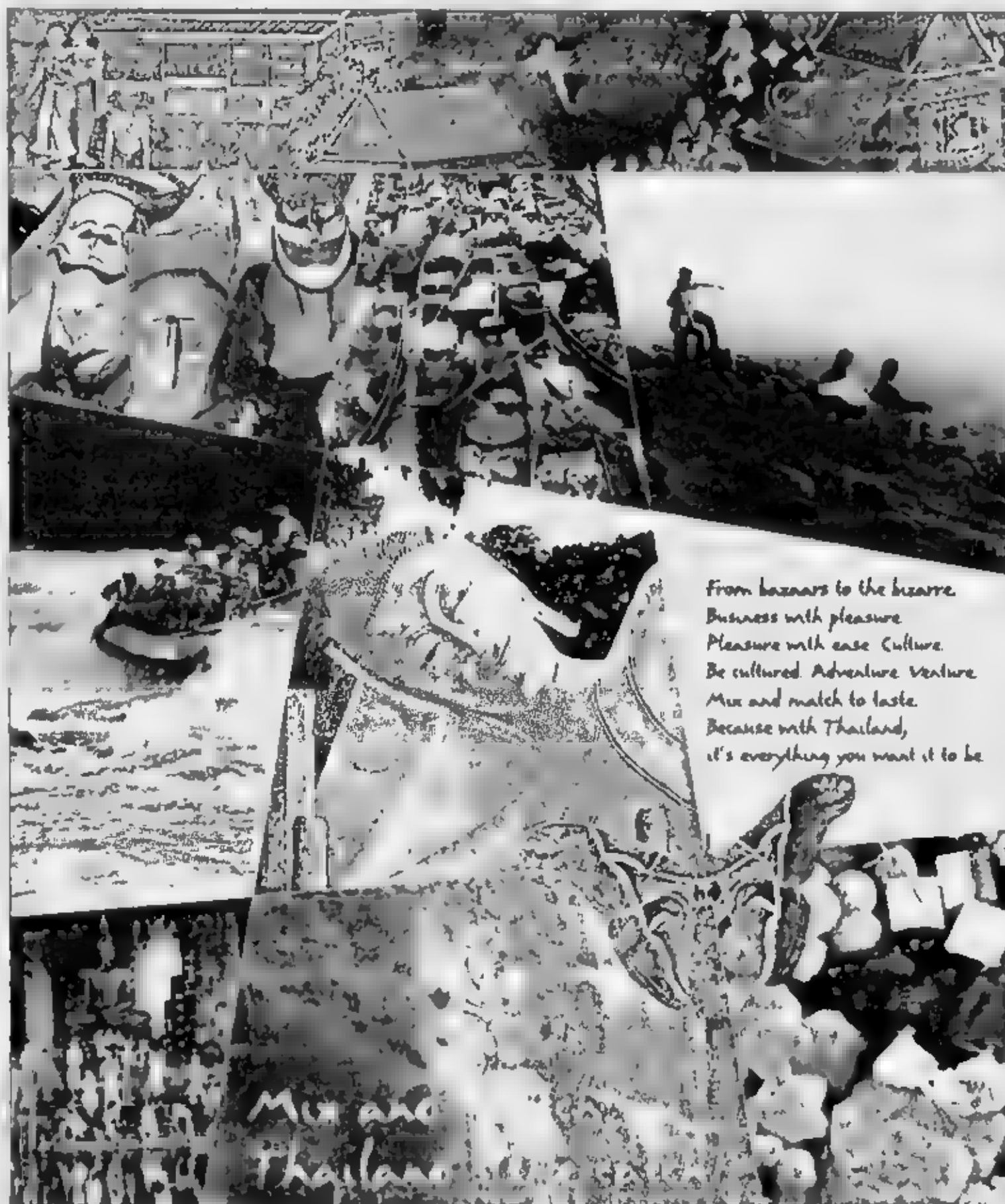
So convinced she was about the power of self-healing that her entire family is now a family of pranic healers.

Intelligent cells

If Dr. Deepak Chopra, renowned guru and author of best-selling books on antaging and healing, believed that human cells have an intelligence that will listen when talked to and react positively when programmed properly, then healing the self makes a whole lot of good sense.

It is said that the power of the mind to create is just as potent as the power to destroy. Tapping the positive forces all humans are imbued with merely challenges us all to create.

Imagine then a world of healers. What a new mankind we could create. Imagine a whole new world.



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Philippine Daily Inquirer



ENGINEER John and Marivic Ocampo with Dr. Rosa Marie Yabut, medical director and pranic healer who helped the couple deliver a healthy pranic baby.



THE FAMILY of lawyer Nester and Gloria Romulo received the Healing Angel award in October 2001.

MAY

Enchanted Kingdom

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

Put a twist into your holidays.

Come May, it's time for Mother's Day. On the 11th & 12th, all mothers in need who visit with their families get free admission. Also a chance to be our "May 11-12th of the Day." That's a Mother's Day treat the whole family can enjoy.



Shedding more light on the causes of a sudden death

By Alex Y. Vergara

It wouldn't have made any difference had the late Rico Yan taken Ecstasy pills before going to bed in the wee hours of Good Friday. His reputation for snoring like a steam engine, as some friends say, had probably nothing to do with his death either.

Almost a week after Rico had been laid to rest, the young actor and the circumstances behind his sudden death continue to spice conversations among show biz-obsessed Filipinos. Hemorrhagic pancreatitis, more popularly known as *bangungot*, has suddenly assumed a life of its own, giving many a man reason to pause before raiding the dinner buffet or romping off on a Saturday night drinking spree.

Such fears, says Dr. John Arnel Pangilinan of St. Luke's Hospital, are understandable but often unwarranted. There's also no conclusive evidence linking *bangungot* to salty or rice diets. The gastroenterologist, who is not speak-

ing for the Yan family and has no connection with them whatsoever, also brushes aside nasty talk that dangerous drugs had triggered Rico's death.

"If we're to base it on official autopsy reports," says Pangilinan, "Rico died from cardiac arrest resulting from acute hemorrhagic pancreatitis. Some drugs cause chronic pancreatitis, but Ecstasy isn't one of them."

In fact, adds Pangilinan, only 15-20 percent of cases involving pancreatitis become hemorrhagic. The condition has thus been changed to "necrotizing" (from the word "necrosis" or, literally, rotting) pancreatitis to differentiate it from the milder form of inflammatory pancreatitis.

Common among men

"Alcohol, not food, is a toxin that directly affects the pancreas," he says. "If you're a chronic alcohol drinker, you've set the stage for developing inflammatory pancreatitis in the future. But instances wherein one develops acute or necrotizing pancreatitis



DR. John Arnel Pangilinan explains the "what ifs" surrounding actor Rico Yan's death.

'Bangungot' has suddenly assumed a life of its own, giving many a man reason to pause before raiding the dinner buffet or romping off on a Saturday night drinking spree

after an alcohol binge are very rare," Rico, of course, is one such example.

"I would assume that the combination of pulutan and alcohol did him in," he adds. "Rico was just *malas* [unlucky]. Many people survive after going to sleep drunk or with a full stomach."

It's wise, however, to refrain from going to bed soon after eating a heavy meal. "Whenever we eat, the body's systems are also on the go," he explains. "Imagine if you sleep immediately after eating a full meal. The digestive system will work overtime to digest the food, while the rest of the body's systems go down. You're liable to get indigestion."

Cases of alcohol-induced pancreatitis are more common among men. Not a few people who develop mild forms of pancreatitis live to tell about the experience. Pangilinan and his colleagues usually give them antibiotics and medicines that inhibit the organ from secreting enzymes. They also require patients to go on intravenous nutrition (dextrose) for some time to give their pancreas a rest. Surgery may be necessary in some cases where the pancreas has already necrosed.

"We sometimes recommend an operation to remove debris in the

SHEDDING/p.c3

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Per DOH-BFAD Permit No. 0212 Series of 2002

Enchanted Kingdom

JUNE

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30

More Summer Fun of Celebrations

A flood of celebrations await you in June, starting with Independence Day on the 12th. Wear our nation's proud colors - red, white and blue - and get free return tickets plus a chance to be our "Lucky Visitor of the Day." Make it real get those same privileges on Father's Day weekend on the 15th and 16th. Finally, our Laguna Day celebrations from the 19th to the 23rd give Laguna residents free return tickets and a chance to be our "Lucky Visitor of the Day."

For more information, visit our website at www.enchantedkingdom.com or call 830-2111 to 17 (Manila), 843-6073 to 78 (Bila, Roca). Per DTI-Laguna Permit No. 03-081 Series of 2002

LIFESTYLE

For feedback, text us at (0918) 9 7 5026
or email us at lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph



Pamper yourself with pineapple and papaya

THE BOUNTY of nature's harvest is evident in summer more than any other season. Thus, you can have your pick of the best fruits available. But did you ever wonder what uses fruits have other than for sustenance?

Apart from the usual desserts or drinks, fruits contain enzymes that have youth- and beauty-enhancing potentials. Instead of discarding the extra slices of fruit on your plate, turn them into facial masks and skin preparation.



Cory Quirino

You may eat fruit or you may apply it, which one is it going to be? My suggestion is, while you are munching on your favorite fruit, you can use it on your face or body!

For sun-damaged skin, try this: Crush half of a fresh, ripe pineapple. Avoiding the eye area, apply the crushed fruit to the damaged area. Leave on for 10 minutes. Rinse with chilled water.

Cool off your insides and fight free radical damage to your cells with a dose of pineapple juice. Not only is it refreshing, it's got phytochemical properties that boost our body's immune system.

Pineapple Quencher

- 1-2 c pineapple chunks (canned or fresh) or get the canned pineapple juice with pulp
- 1 c crushed ice
- 1 tsp honey
- 1 tsp nonfat milk (optional)

In a blender, mix the ingredients until foamy. Strain the pulp (if fresh fruit was used). Drink chilled. Or, extract the juice from a juicer, then mix in a blender.

As skin exfoliant and soother, papaya is ideal. There are two ways to enjoy this tropical fruit. For a papaya salad, chop half a papaya in chunks and mix with the juice of one calamansi. Eat all you can.

Papaya Poultice

- 1/2 ripe papaya (chilled)

Mash the papaya into a pulp. Apply on a dry, clean face. Leave on for 10 minutes. Avoid the eye area. You may apply a piece of cotton dipped in chilled water to your eyes.

I can never over-emphasize the need to detoxify. Papaya has enzymes that are good for your insides as well as your "outside." You can never over-doze on fruits, so make them a necessary part of your diet.

While we are focused on our physical wellness and attractiveness, there is the matter of our peace of mind that bears attending to.

The disquiet that causes us all pressure is stress and there are countless ways to combat this just as there are many solutions to a problem. Here is one of them and it's probably the simplest of them all.

Nature sounds

Research has shown that the sound of nature has the power to lull the senses into a state of calm. If you have no time to step into a park or sit by the seashore or mountain ridge, go to any popular music store and get yourself a copy of music for meditation with nature sounds. Just 10 minutes of listening time is right to be fit and end your day peacefully. And while you are listening, close your eyes, imagine you are there—hearing nature's healing calls—the sounds of surf, rain, chirping, rustling of leaves... Repeat to yourself "I am at peace. I am peace."

Together

There is nothing more assuring than the knowledge that you are in control of your moods—especially your sense of equanimity. Keeping yourself "together" may be a sync for

some but quite a challenge to others.

Being "together" means that you know yourself well with the underlying truth that

you are in sync with yourself. What better way to start than now.

Love and light!

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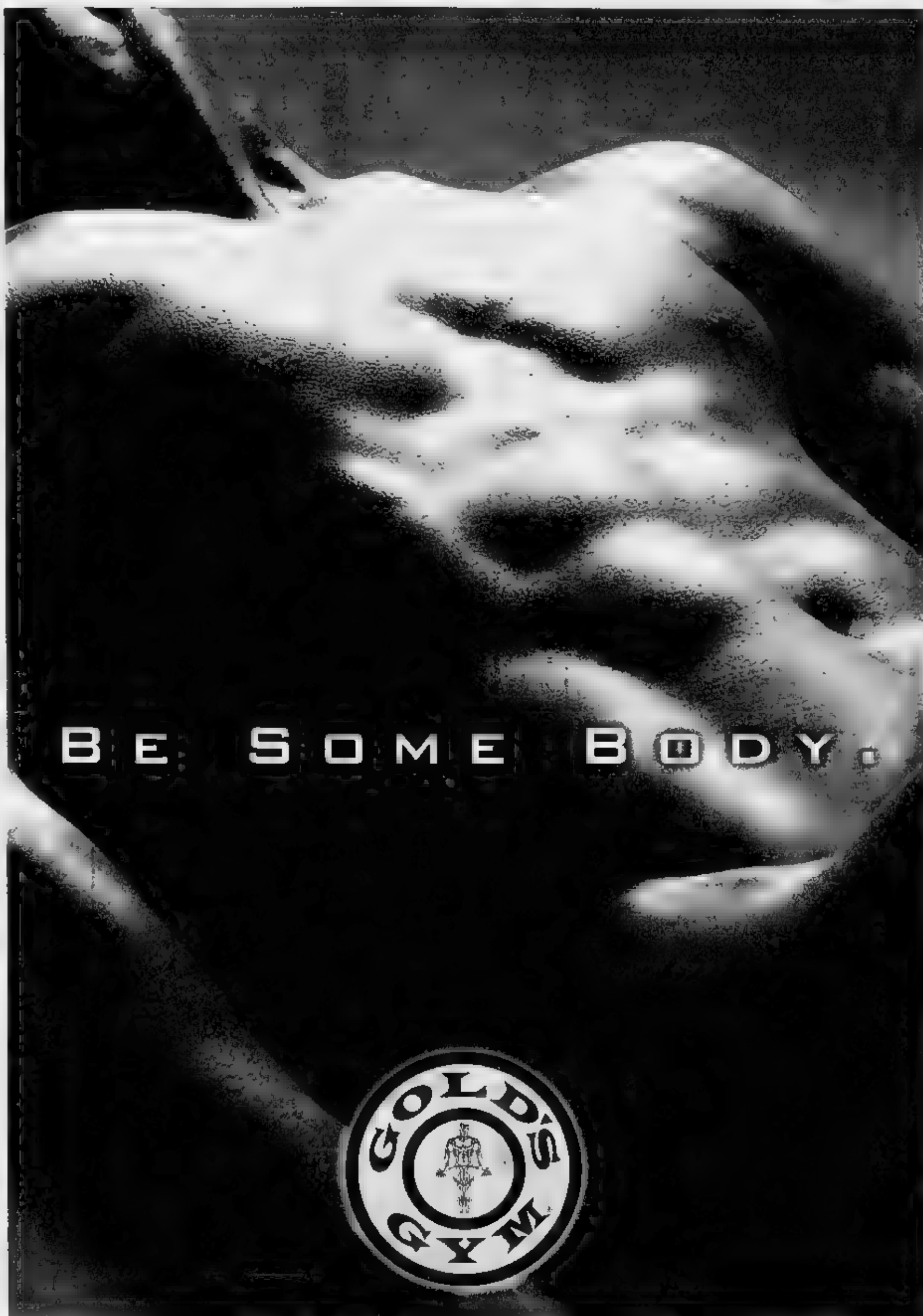
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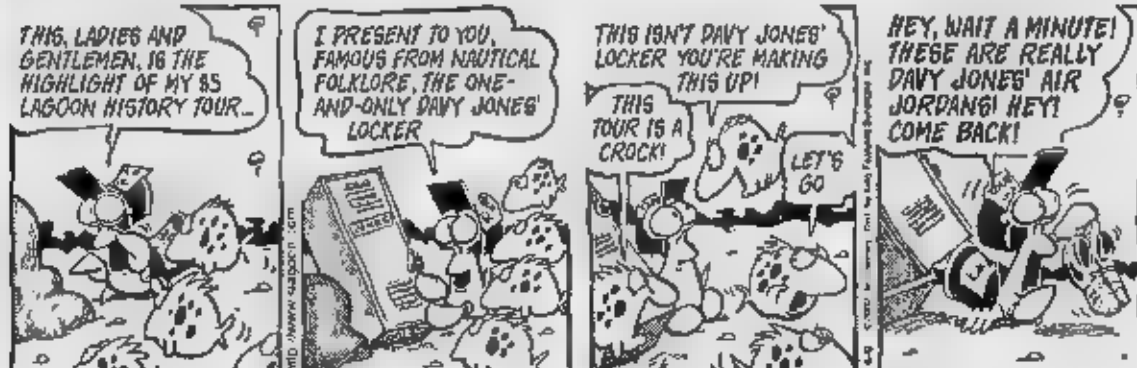


SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY

EKO

BY EDGAR DIONELA



BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT

MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO



HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Hugh Hefner, Dennis Quaid, Keshia Knight Pulliam
Happy Birthday: Your aptitude to intuitively understand your friends and family will help you form solid unions this year. You will be attracted to creative groups that can offer you the inspiration you need to develop your own talents. You will be intent on finding perfect harmony in your life. Your numbers are 3, 16, 17, 22, 28, 40

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Use your home for meetings or for a friendly get-together. Be accommodating but don't let anyone about your secrets. Someone you are dealing with may not be trustworthy.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Don't push your luck at work. Focus on what it is you need to accomplish and avoid interaction. You would be wise to avoid discussions concerning emotional matters.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): You should be looking into investments, however, don't be too quick to borrow money in order to take part. If you can't afford to put money into something you probably shouldn't.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Romantic opportunities will be plentiful if you get out and mingle with people who have similar interests. Your contribution to any group you join will bring you popularity.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): You will be drawn to someone who appears to be most dedicated to the philosophy that he follows. The more you can delve into different backgrounds, the more you will understand.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): You'll be charismatic, engaging and will attract a lot of attention today. The more you interact with others the better you'll do. Your confidence should get a boost that should enable you to move ahead.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): You can get the most done if you work alongside your colleagues or peers. Your unique way of doing things will bring inspiration to those watching you.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): You'll be looking for something a little different to occupy your time. Social events will promote romance or at the very least strong friendships. You will learn from those you encounter.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Secret involvements are likely to backfire on you. Changes to your living arrangements will turn out better than you thought possible. Be prepared to tighten your belt.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): It's time to make the effort to rectify any problems you've been having with others. Get together with old friends or relatives and reflect on days gone by in order to appreciate at that you have.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Your achievements regarding your professional and financial situation are looking good. Your long hard journey to do and to be the best you can should be paying off by now.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Your emotions may be a little frazzled today but if you concentrate on creative projects you will find that your day can be filled with positive results. Be receptive to those offering sound advice and wisdom.

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- Prominence
- Engulf
- Singer Lane
- English river
- Van Gogh
- of Gilead
- Citrus fruit
- Dogpatch matron
- Brief
- commercial
- Mugs and goblets
- Safed leafstalk
- Three-time Indy winner Rick
- Siamese
- Type of daisy
- Printing plant worker
- Hamlet's first choice
- Man and Dogs
- Freight jumper
- OPEC product
- Solo of "Star Wars"
- "Hallowed be name..."
- On the briny
- Football kicks
- Loafer or pump
- Beauty parlor employees
- Bigots
- Gray and Candler
- Less common
- Without principles
- Support
- Actress Myrna
- Woman's career option
- Equestrian game
- Sailor's direction
- Art supporter
- Small whirlpool
- Bovine bunch
- Actress Della
- Mexican money

DOWN

- Roosevelt's dog
- Eager
- Old-time comedienne
- Wind dir
- Japanese warrior
- Envelope
- Charity
- Hebrew letter
- Spirits
- Put an end to
- Oven setting
- Obscure
- TV award
- Affirmative votes
- Grimaldi's
- Lingistic suffix
- City on the Adriatic
- Adge
- Greek comedienne
- Lili
- Blueprints
- Bonanza
- Deafest
- "The Highwayman" poet
- Cloves
- Frightened
- Chinook
- Fetter
- Saint Marie
- Brit's indignant comment
- Siblical boat
- Trials to outrun
- Nanking nanny
- Sleeper spy
- Hebrew weight
- Army post
- GM make, for short
- Spinning loy or a string
- Actress Charlotte
- Get-up-and-go

By Eugene R. Puffenberger
Houston, TX

Monday's Puzzle Solved

SEGA L OHNO MASK
RAO MOAT OGEE
CAMUS ALPHAMALEN
MITERS ELEVEN
SCALING TALLESS
CORINNA SLOTT
OMAN ANYHOW DIG
RAYEC DARE SMELL
ESR A RMA OLLA
ACME MOUNTED
CECROPEA ELEGAS
ALCIA SALLAW
BETATRONS ALAS
AGED TREE 3 NOS
TYBL SERA EAGLE

BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON



MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL



KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA



LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO



TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING



Autism seminar for parents and professionals

A SEMINAR on autism titled "Understanding Autism... A Guide for Parents and Professionals," will be held from April 13 to May 11, Saturdays, 1-7 p.m., at the Asian Social Institute, Leon Guinto, Manila.

Seminar fee is P3,500. A reservation fee of P500 will be deductible from the seminar fee. Those interested to join may pay at any BPI Family Bank. Account number will be given upon confirmation. The seminar fee is nonrefundable.

Only those with reservations will be notified of any changes in schedule or venue.

Topics include: Autism Defined, Screening and Diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder, Alternatives to Behaviorism, Teaching and Learning Styles in Autism, Case Analysis, Course Application and Presentation, and up-to-date information about autism.

Call: St. Dymphna SpEd

Consultancy Center at 253-8236 or fax 233-3645.

STRESS MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP. The KI Association Int'l. (KIAI) Inc. will hold "Physio-Mental Unity: A Holistic Approach to Stress Management" on May 4, 9:30 a.m.-4 p.m. at the Symmetry Int'l. Training Hall, 2/F First Midland Condominium, Gamboa Street, Legaspi Village, Makati City. The

workshop will be conducted by Ernesto Taig, KIAI founder and chief instructor. Call: 892-9887, (0917) 793-9480 or (0919) 670-8628.

FREE RECTAL EXAMINATION. Healthway Medical Clinics in Binondo offers a free digital rectal examination and consultation with a urologist every Tuesday and Saturday of April, 3-5 p.m. Visit Healthway Medical Clinics at 2/F Paramount Building, Quintin Paredes Street, Binondo, Manila. Call: 241-2246/2056.

WEEKLY DOSAGE



PRIMA ballerina Lisa Macuja-Elizalde with kids Missy and Mac-Mac during a photo session at the GlaxoSmithKline Phils. (GSK) office in Makati. The Elizalde kids are endorsers of Frisomel, GSK's premium brand of powdered milk for growing children 6 months onward. Frisomel contains alpha-linolenic acid (ALA), a US Food and Drug Administration recommended pediatric nutrition. ALA helps children get the optimum amount of docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) for proper brain and body development.



CM Star Brett Sales recommends the use of aromatherapy products such as Westwood Body Care's Lotions, Soaps, Aromatherapy products contain natural extracts derived from plants. Their nourishing benefits are combined with natural aromatics that have a pleasing effect on your mental, emotional and spiritual being. Call CM Star head office at 913-9066 and 912-5667, or visit 86 Ninth Ave., Cubao, QC.



ANCHOR Full Cream Milk and Mercury Drug are offering a special promo for the drugstore's loyal patrons. Customers may avail of free Ovaltine sachets when they purchase any size of Anchor Full Cream Milk. A 180-g Anchor Full Cream Milk comes with one free Ovaltine sachet; 450 g with two free Ovaltine sachets; and 800 g with three free Ovaltine sachets. Available at Mercury Drug outlets nationwide.



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How to enjoy summer

THE MARCH/APRIL issue of Healthy Options News Digest gives sun protection tips and other interesting facts for summer and the whole year round.

The cover story, "Health buzz," talks about herbal essential oils that will soothe, refresh or remedy summer discomforts, find out how beta carotene protects the skin; and other study findings. In "Natural beauty," smart sunning tips will not only improve your mental health but will also prevent devastating physical effects of overexposure to the sun's rays. Tremendous strides in science have also changed the way people regard infertility, and the Women's Health section will help readers understand that a diagnosis of infertility is not a verdict of sterility. For weight-watchers who want to be health club or gym members, read "Love the gym," which dispels myths, negative notions and other excuses that may be preventing you from shaping up. Finally, know how to spot a genuine herbal treatment through Consumer Alert. Read



the health-promoting benefits of acupuncture in "Alternative medicine" and anthocyanins in Supplement Review.

Healthy Options is located at 1/L Shangri-La Plaza Mall, Mandaluyong City; Rustan's Supermarket, Makati City; 2/L Festival Supermall, Flamingo, Alabang; G/L Ayala Center, Cebu City; LG/L SM City, North Edsa, QC; 2/L SM City Manila; Greenbelt, Ayala Center, Makati City; at 2/L SM Megamall B, Mandaluyong City; and soon in Pampanga.

FOR KIDS. To help supplement your child's nutritional requirements, give them UCare milk. UCare comes in two variants that provide total nourishment for children of different ages. For toddlers aged 1-3 years old, there's UCare 1-2-3, a growing-up milk packed with growth boosters, a combination of brain boosters, body

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A trip to the moon on a bunk bed

By Angelica Candano

(This essay was one of the winners in the Museo Pambata and Philippine Astronomical Society's on-the-spot essay writing contest held at the Tuklas Science Room of Museo Pambata in celebration of National Astronomy Week.)

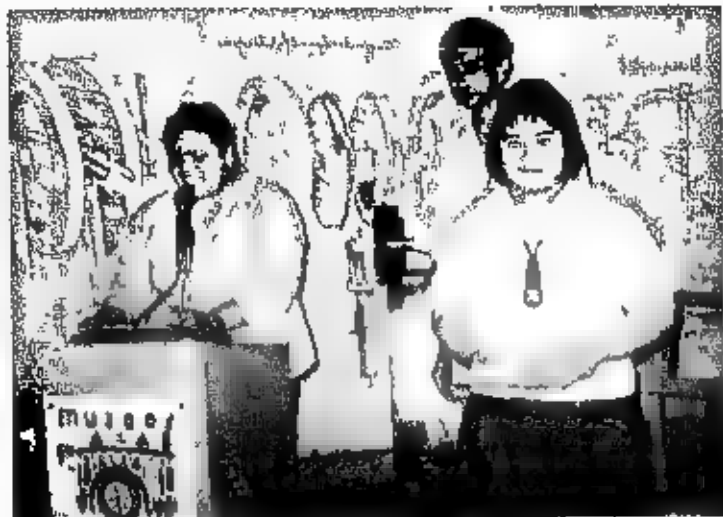
I AM not really sure where I heard of it or even where I read it but a monk had once said "it is better to travel a hundred miles rather than to read a hundred miles of scrolls." I couldn't agree more, but if you can do both, why don't you?

So early on I decided that if I couldn't travel to all the places where I wanted to go—the Amazon Rainforest, the depths of the ocean or even back in time to the Renaissance—I would make it a point to read about them. Travel there not by plane or boat but by paper and ink. Traveling via books is quite easy. All it takes is a book, a nice comfy couch, seat or whatever I can find and my imagination.

Though I did most of my traveling by books, planes were also a good alternative. My father would always say that experience (education, too) are what we need to survive nowadays. And we would make it a point to always jet-set into the wild blue yonder a couple of times a year. But of all the places I would have wanted to go (the Inca Ruins at Machu Picchu, Peru, a Mediterranean cruise or even an Alaskan cruise), space was, is and will always be my dream destination.

Space game

Ever since I was small, my younger sister and I (before the youngest was born) would convert our bunk bed into a space shuttle (we chose it instead of a rocket so that it would be scientifically correct to use it again and again) complete with mission controls (couch) and crew (stuffed toys and dolls). We would make up



WINNER. Immaculate Conception Academy student Angelica L. Candano receives a citation for her winning essay from Museo Pambata director for programs Desiree M. Llano and Philippine Astronomical Society's Bernie Esporas, chair of National Astronomy Week.

stories about being captured by invisible and obviously non-existent space aliens. Our bed would be a mess after that game: stuffed toys, dolls and bed sheets everywhere and us, laughing our heads off. Our pajamas would be our space suits, backpacks our life-support system and a piece of paper with drawings on it stuck with masking tape on a barbecue stick our flag during our moon landing. But we stopped playing that game. Maybe because we grew too old for that, or our yayas got mad at us for making such a mess or we just got tired of that.

One planet

What I like about space is that there are always more questions than answers, more mysteries to solve, more thoughts to ponder. The existence of the unexplained and unexplainable always seems to grab my attention. They always present challenges and when one is solved, another emerges. And, of course, there is the beauty of it, the beauty of something so infinite and mysterious and the fact that different people have different perspectives. Show different people a picture of a crescent moon and one may say it looks like a cookie bitten into a weird shape, another may say another thing. Ask me and I will say that it looks like the Cheshire cat in "Alice in Wonderland" who is "a smile without a cat."

It might sound strange but our differences seem to unite us when

it comes to Astronomy. We are one species, one race and we share one planet, one home. These days, with the aid of technology, space is being used as a weapon to send out missiles and to spy on other countries. Why don't we use space to unite us rather than separate us. If peace is within our grasp, why don't we grab it and give it a chance?

In Greek and Roman mythology, the gods and goddesses would put heroes and great animals and creatures up into the night sky to be constellations. I used to look for the outlines of Orion, the great hunter, or Pegasus, the winged horse, and find comfort in just knowing they're up there watching over us.

Recently, I haven't been able to see them, maybe because of the smog in the air or maybe because of the bright lights in the city or maybe I just didn't try hard enough or maybe, just maybe, I didn't believe in them anymore. That is my worst nightmare. That one day children or even children at heart won't see them anymore because of pollution, lights or even worse, not believing in them anymore. When you do not believe, they do not exist and when they do not exist they are gone forever. Please never stop believing.



MARATHONERS warm-up at the starting line.

Let the river flow and the runners run

WHERE most marathon courses use the out-and-back method (meaning, a long, straight course that returns to the starting line as its finish line), the marathon for Pasig River's rehabilitation was a punishing, circuitous point-to-point course that began in front of the Manila Cathedral in Intramuros and ended at the Global City of Fort Bonifacio.

Where most marathons are held in contained routes that are easy for both runners and race marshalls, this one wandered through small communities and side streets, whisked across major thoroughfares, contended with pre-dawn traffic and crossed 11 bridges with a view of the Pasig River.

This marathon ran west to east, following the route that Rajah Sulayman took when he fled the Spanish invasion of 1571, sailing 27 km upstream, up to the lake and to the lake town of Bai. It also passed through historical landmarks like Manila City Hall, San Felipe de Neri Church, Quiapo Church and Sta. Ana Church.

Organized by the Clean and Green Foundation, the Philippine Track and Field Association, the Fort Bonifacio Development Corp., the Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission, the MMDA and a host of other government agencies, this marathon aimed to awaken concern for the future of the Pasig River.



FR. Robert Reyes raises the hand of the PRHM champ **Crisanto Canillo**.

Crisanto Canillo of the Philippine Navy won the marathon. On y older cousin Rove. Canillo (2:43:35) and third placer Roland Cedillo (2:44:02) could keep pace with Canillo, who left others in the dust with his time of 2:28:12.

A neophyte runner Geraldine Salza from Sultan Kudarat (3:28:12), outpaced other veteran runners in the women's division, besting Judy Madredeña Enate Sayrol, Melinda Manahan and Jona Gayumba Atienza.

Canillo won P50,000 and a trophy while Salza received P30,000. Cash prizes and trophies were also given to the Old-est Runner (Raymond San Juan,

88), the youngest runner (Ric-Ric Quinawayan III, 4), the group with the biggest participation (Technological Institute of the Philippines) and winners of a 5-K Fun Run which was held simultaneously inside the Global City.

Race organizers led by Imelda P. Sarmiento, C&GF executive director, said the PRHM, which is only on its second run this year, is advocating for the continued rehabilitation of the Pasig River.

The long-term dream is to institutionalize the event so that the country can have its own version of an in-city marathon akin to the New York, Boston, London and Berlin Marathons.

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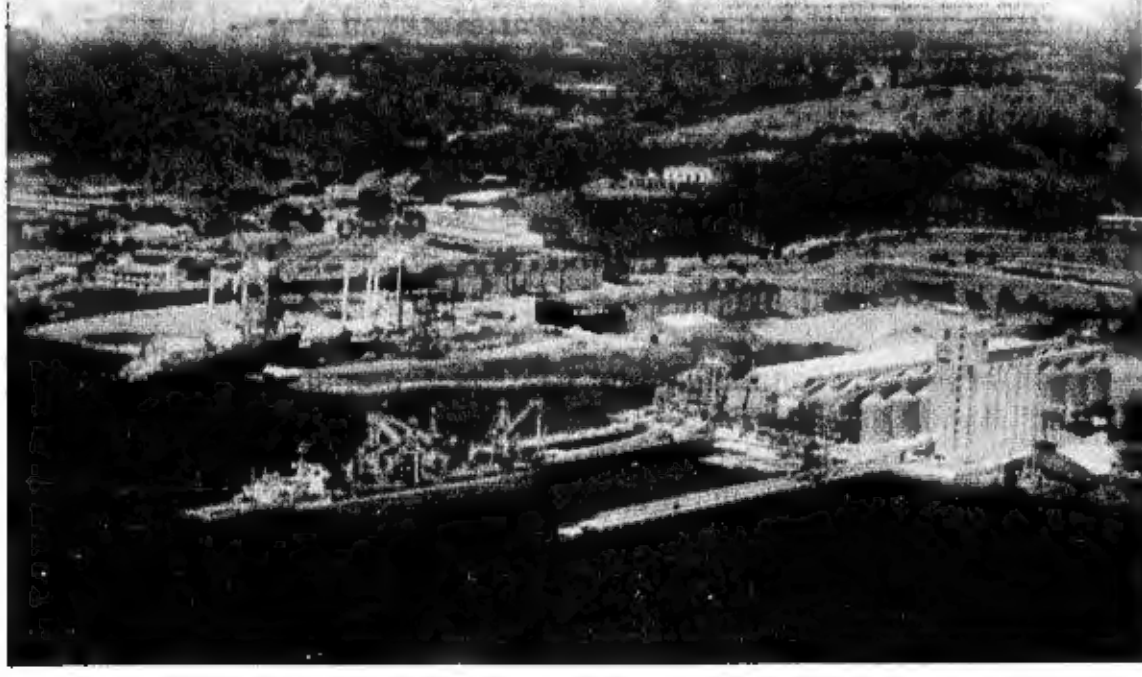
Theme: "Magiting na Lumipas, Magandang Bukas."



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Gawad sa makataong pag-unlad

President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo together with former President Fidel V. Ramos congratulates Governor Ding Roman for attaining the highest level of human development index since 1994 to present.



Gov. Leonardo "Ding" Roman said that he considers as an awakening and an inspiration the achievement award for human development received by Bataan from the Human Development Network (HDN) headed by its President Professor Solita Collas Monsod in cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

"For the last decade as governor of Bataan, we have been looking for solutions to improve the lot, especially of the less fortunate in the province, until we received this award, as if telling us that we are on the right track," Roman said.

Bataan was awarded the Gawad sa Makataong Pag-unlad for attaining the highest level in human development index since 1994. The award was given by HDN in cooperation with the United Nations Development Program and

National Economic Development Authority. Bataan was recognized for registering the highest level in life expectancy, basic education and per capita income.

Messages



Today's celebration of Araw ng Kagitingan is dedicated to the ideals of freedom, unity and progress. It comes also at a time when we are in the midst of the RP-US Balikatan Exercise 02-1, a joint military exercise between the Philippines and the United States as an essential step in mutually strengthening their respective military capabilities to respond to the global threat of terrorism.

Araw ng Kagitingan is also our way of paying homage to the countless Filipino war dead, as well as the veterans who are still with us. To these brave hearts who fell in Bataan and Corregidor, and in the many other places and times, let us join hands in common bereavement.

Let us stay united in common rejection of war as an instrument of national policy, wherein victory does not come with the defeat of the enemy but merely the beginning of a greater battle for economic progress, social reforms, political stability and national cohesion.

Today's enemies are mass poverty, graft and corruption, lawlessness, disunity and divisiveness.

GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
President
Republic of the Philippines



Throughout history, the people of Bataan have shown their gallantry and bravery before the world. Four centuries ago, our forefathers resisted the plundering Dutch invaders. It was a fierce battle with our locals choosing the glory of death to the ignominy of surrender.

Yet, we have endured as we now face the future with bright prospects. The last decade brought us progress incomparable to all of history combined. Investment is on its peak; communication is modernized; human index is at its highest; infrastructure is at its best; education is of high quality; environment is well protected; employment is at its highest and crime rate is at its lowest.

All these we dedicate to April 9, which is not only a day for Bataan but also a day for all the nations of the world. For it was on that day, sixty years ago, that the grounds of Bataan were consecrated by the heroism of our World War II veterans. Bataan in 1942 was when the barriers of regionalism in Philippine history was first broken. It was when Ilocanos, Pampangos, Cebuano, Bicolanos and the rest joined hands with their American brothers to fight for a common stand.

And we remember. For it is only by remembering that we will be ready to face the challenges of the future. For now, let us celebrate as Bataan has risen high enough to meet the demands of the world.

Governor Leonardo B. Roman
Governor of Bataan

BATAAN: 60 years after

By Leo Ruben Manrique

Bataan was one of the most devastated provinces in the Asia-Pacific region sixty years ago. The destruction was so huge to overcome that recovery and progress had to take the sidelines in favor of survival. No one could have foreseen what the future had in store.

But the dedication of our people to prosperity was even greater than all the challenges. We have proven that we can overcome, as our province, sixty years later, is now in the forefront of socio-economic development in Central Luzon.

Bataan has the distinct honor of being the first and only fully energized province in the whole country. Even the remotest sitios in far-flung barangays now enjoy the convenience of electricity.

With energy, comes rapid industrialization. Being in the middle of the "growth triangle" in Central Luzon with Subic and Clark completing the triad, the region has become an economic haven. And it all started here in Bataan.

Thirty years ago, long before global economics was an issue, Bataan initiated the idea of directly competing with other countries in the international market. The then Export Processing Zone Authority (EPZA) established the first and until now the biggest export zone in Mariveles now known as the Bataan Economic Zone (BEZ). Its success led to the establishment of ecozones in Baguio, Mactan and Calabarzon area. It has also become a framework for the creation of SBMA and Clark Economic Zone. Today, more than 50 per cent of the country's dollar earnings come from economic zones. There are four ecozones in Bataan, the Bataan Economic Zone (BEZ) and the Petrochemical Industrial Estate in Mariveles, the Bataan Technology Park in Morong and the Hermosa Special Economic Zone in Hermosa town.

The province is also host to several industries and businesses, notably: The San Miguel Grains Terminal, the ATI, Petron Refinery, Phil. Explosives, Asia Brown Boveri, Limay Bulk Handling Terminal, Limay Grinding Mills, Inc., Unioil, Liquigas and Total Petroleum. Owning to their presence is the fact that Bataan has one of the highest employment rate in Region III.

High employment rate is a contributing factor why crime rate here is among the lowest in the country and the Crime Solution Efficiency Rate is at 98.3 per cent.

And what is development without infrastructure, which is said to be the portrait of a progressive state? Bataan's entire 800-kilometer road had been fully developed. A new road on the western side of the peninsula, which will connect Mariveles to Bagac is now under construction and the Subic - Clark access road will start construction soon. This will shorten the travel time from Manila to Bataan by an hour thus making the province more accessible to the Metropolis.

At present, there are 6 bus companies, 302 units of mini-buses, 891 units of jeepneys giving their services to commuters. The port of Orion, a newly opened national port, was designed for roll-on-roll-off ships to carry passengers to and from Manila. There are two ferries that ply the Orion-Manila route. Travel time to Manila via Manila bay is less than one hour.

The Provincial Government has completed construction of the Bataan People's Center, an 8000-seat coliseum which is now the favorite venue of sports and cultural activities in the province. It has also become one of the regular venues of PBA games. The Bataan Transport Mall, located in the heart of the City of Balanga is now operational. It has decongested traffic in major thoroughfares of the city. A 1,000-unit Provincial Government Housing Project, the first of its kind, is nearing completion in Samal town. Communication in the province has been modernized with two of the largest telecommunication firms in the country operating here, PLDT and DIGITEL. Private initiatives that add to the telecommunication services are the operations of various franchise holders such as Bartlex Inc., LBC, JRS, PT&T, DHI, EasyCall, Mobiline, Smart and Globe Telecom. There are several internet service providers in the province. Space Cable TV in Mariveles and Balanga, Clear-Vision Cable in Orani and MABUHAY TV in Abucay and Samal provide Cable Television services.

In the field of education, Bataan has 199 elementary schools, 42 High Schools and 13 Colleges. Soon, Letran College

will open its Bataan Campus in a 10-hectare site in Abucay by 2003, while Kalayaan College founded by University of the Philippines professors and educators will open this year, also in Abucay.

The Bataan Child Empowerment Council, a creation of the Provincial Government, has recently adopted the Gabay-Bata Program to assist in the rearing of children during their critical years of formation.

There are 10 hospitals here with a combined bed capacity of 560, 12 Universal and Commercial Banks, six first class shopping malls, two first-run movie houses, four 3-star hotels, eight in-land resorts, and quite a number of beautiful beaches.

Just recently, the province was awarded the Gawad Makataong Pag-unlad by the Human Development Network for attaining the highest level in Human Development Index as recognized by the United Nations Development

BATAAN

4,000-man USN second warship in honor of Bataan heroes

USS BATAAN is the LHD 5, the new multi-purpose amphibious assault ship of the United States Navy. It made its debut during the Gulf War and just recently, it was in Afghanistan making its presence felt in the war against terrorism.

USS Bataan has six hundred hospital beds and 4,000 crewmembers. Its mess hall is called "Abucay Café" named after the town of Abucay, Bataan where American and Filipino soldiers had their last decent meal before the relentless and devastating Japanese onslaught that lasted for three months.

Governor Leonardo Roman and then Congressman, now SBMA Chairman Felicio Payumo were invited to the commissioning ceremony of the USS Bataan in Mississippi, USA. At that time, many Americans were wondering why the newest warship of the US Navy was named after a far away place instead of a US President, or one of the 50 States. Some of them did not even know where Bataan is.

It is not very well known that the LHD 5 is the second warship to be named USS Bataan as a tribute to the gallantry and heroism of the defenders of Bataan Peninsula during the early days of World War II. The first was the USS Bataan (CVL 29), launched and commissioned in 1944. CVL 29 earned seven battle stars for its World War II service in the Pacific, which included the battle of the Philippine Sea and operations against the Japanese home islands. The ship was also used during the Korean conflict in 1950 before finally being decommissioned in 1954.

USS BATAAN (LHD 5)
United States Navy Multipurpose Amphibious Assault Ship



Magiting na Lumipas Magandang Bukas

Ang kagitingan ng mga Tagapagtanggol ng Bataan ay nasaksihan ng buong mundo hindi lamang noong nakaraang Ikalawang Digmaang Pandaigdig.

Ang kagitingan na ipinamalas ng ating mga bayani animnapung taon na ang nakalilipas ay buhay pa rin sa puso at diwa ng kasalukuyang henerasyon.

Ang kagitingan at kabayanihang iyan ay muling ipinamalas ng mga magulang na nagsakripisyo upang makapag-aral ang kanilang mga mahal sa buhay ng karamihan sa kanila ay magtatapos sa taong ito sa kolehiyo, mataas na baitang at elementarya.

Muling nabuhay ang mga bayani ng ating lahi sa katauhan ng ating mga magulang at guro na nagpapahalaga sa edukasyon ng ating mga kabataan.

Ang Sangguniang Panlalawigan ng Bataan ay nagpupugay sa mga bayani ng lumipas at sa mga bayaning buhay sa kasalukuyang panahon. Kaagapay po ninyo ang inyong panunuang panlalawigan sa inyong pagtahak ng landas tungo sa ibayo pang tagumpay at kaunlaran. Sana'y manatili sa ating lahat ang diwa ng kagitingan ng ating mga bayani sa lahat ng panahon.

Ang Bataan ay may Magiting na Lumipas at Magandang Bukas.

Hon. Leonardo B. Roman
Governor

Hon. Rogelio G. Roque
Vice-Governor

Hon. Edgardo P. Calimbas

Hon. Fernando C. Austria

Hon. Molanio S. Banzon, Jr.

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Hon. Jose M. Carandang

Hon. Reynaldo T. Iba

MANIFESTO OF SUPPORT TO THE BATAAN DECLARATION

A commitment to the environmental protection and sustainable development
in the Province of Bataan by the Concerned Stakeholders

Ensuring sustainable development of Bataan is of critical importance to the well-being of the Central Luzon and Manila Bay regions as it threads the path to economic and social development. The improvement of the Province's environmental systems requires integrated solutions and actions and the dynamic partnerships among its coastal municipalities, government agencies, non-government organizations, the business community as well as other concerned groups and individuals that make Bataan whole.

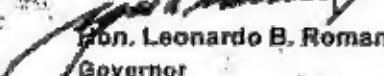


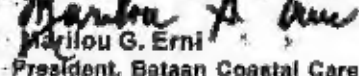
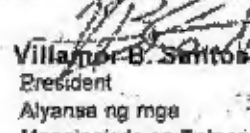
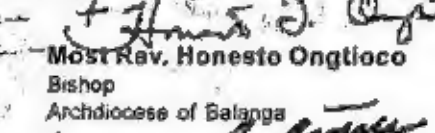
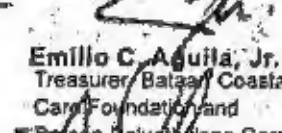

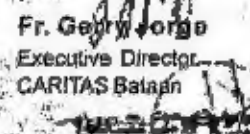
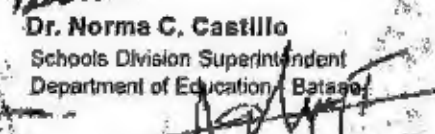
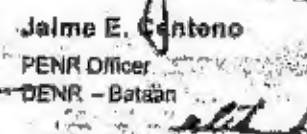
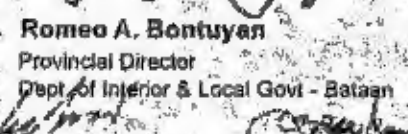
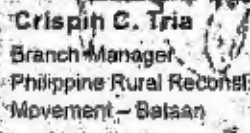
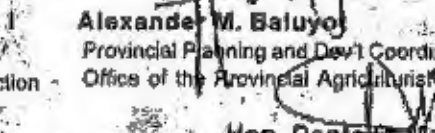
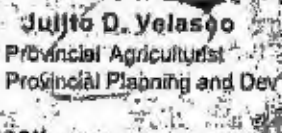
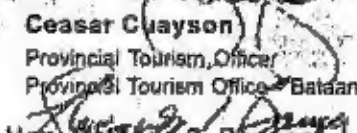
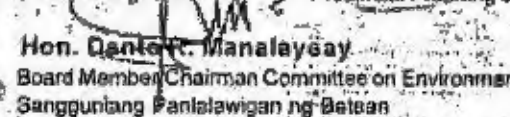
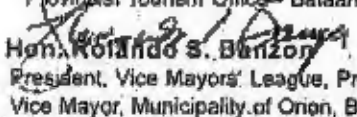
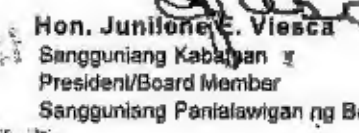
As concerned stakeholders of Bataan, we recognize the need to address critical environmental concerns in the province as well as the present and future challenges.

We realize the significant role of Bataan in the national and regional economic and social development and in consideration of the current state of Manila Bay's environment.

We are determined to realize a vision of a well-developed community with abundant natural resources, clean environment and responsible citizenry empowered to care for nature and its bounty.

As such, we solemnly declare our commitment to fulfill our responsibilities to implement the Coastal Strategy of the Province of Bataan, and pledge to take actions to conscientiously preserve and protect Bataan's environment and natural resources for the sake of the present but most especially the future generations. And we call on other stakeholders to stand with us in making this commitment.

Signed on the 9th of April 2002 in the Province of Bataan.

 Hon. Leonardo B. Roman Governor Province of Bataan	 Hon. Rogelio S. Romo Vice Governor Province of Bataan	 Hon. Jose Alejandro P. Payumo III President, Mayors' League and Mayor, Municipality of Dinalupihan, Bataan	 Maribel A. Tan President, Bataan Coastal Care Foundation, Inc. and Executive Director, Petron Foundation, Inc.
 Villamor B. Santos President Aliyansa ng mga Mangingisda sa Bataan	 Most Rev. Honesto Ongtioco Bishop Archdiocese of Balanga	 Emilio C. Aguila, Jr. Treasurer, Bataan Coastal Care Foundation and Bataan Polytechnic Corporation	 Orlando C. Aparce, Jr. Vice President, Bataan Coastal Care Foundation and Philippine Resins Industries, Inc.
 Fr. George Executive Director CARITAS Bataan	 Dr. Norma C. Castillo Schools Division Superintendent Department of Education - Bataan	 Jaime E. Centeno PENR Officer DENR - Bataan	 Romeo A. Bontuyan Provincial Director Dept. of Interior & Local Govt - Bataan
 Crispin C. Tria Branch Manager Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement - Bataan	 Alexander M. Baluyo Provincial Planning and Dev't Coordinator Office of the Provincial Agriculturist	 Julieto D. Yelasco Provincial Agriculturist Provincial Planning and Dev't Office	 Cesar Clayton Provincial Tourism Officer Provincial Tourism Office - Bataan
	 Hon. Danilo C. Manalaysay Board Member/Chairman Committee on Environment Sangguniang Panlalawigan ng Bataan	 Hon. Rolando S. Banzon President, Vice Mayors' League, Province of Bataan Vice Mayor, Municipality of Orton, Bataan	 Hon. Junilene E. Viesca Sangguniang Kabataan President/Board Member Sangguniang Panlalawigan ng Bataan



Since September 1999, the people of Bataan have made caring for the environment an integral part of their lives. This commitment is anchored on a regular coastal cleanup drive called KONTRA KALAT SA DAGAT.

In just a few years, KKD has combed 107.2 kilometers of coastline and collected 329 metric tons of garbage that litter the shore. And through their efforts, they have catalyzed a sustainable development program called BIGKIS-BATAAN or Bigay Galing sa Kalikasan ng Bataan.

We salute all our volunteers - government workers, business employees, students, people's organizations, religious people, housewives and fisherfolk - who make Kontra Kalat sa Dagat and the cleaning of Bataan a lasting legacy for the future of our children.

Bataan's coastal cleanup nets recognitions for 2003:
The IABC/International Gold Quill Award of Merit, the Anvil
Award of Merit from PRSP and the IABC/Philippines Gold Quill
Award of Excellence.



Fostering public-private partnership towards sustainable development in Bataan

By Allan Victorino

On January 29, 2002, Bataan Governor proudly strode to the stage of the Hotel Intercontinental to receive the Philippine Gold Quill Award of Excellence for the province's coastal cleanup program KONTRA KALAT SA DAGAT. Given by the International Association of Business Communicators Philippines (IABC/Philippines), it was the first time the awards were handed out, making Bataan among only a handful of pioneer recipients who raise the standards of business communication in the Philippines.

A month after, in February 22, Kontra Kalat sa Dagat was again declared winner, this time of the prestigious Anvil Awards from the Public Relations Society of the Philippines. The Anvil Award of Merit was Bataan's second in a row since 2000.

For a province implementing a long-term Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) project, the string of awards clearly indicate that the coastal cleanup initiative has successfully catalyzed public support and fostered partnerships in environmental management in Bataan.

Called BIGKIS-BATAAN or Bigay Galing sa Kalikasan ng Bataan, this environmental management program aims to ensure that the province's natural resources are carefully utilized in support of economic development. Such an ambitious undertaking can only succeed through the dynamic participation of every sector in Bataan.

Fortunately, the holding of the first Kontra Kalat sa Dagat in September 1999 not only gave birth to the regular conduct of the activity all across the province. It also gave rise to the sealing of a partnership among the Bataan Provincial Government and its attendant agencies, the private sector led by the Bataan Coastal Care Foundation (BCCF) and the active civil society movement in the province. Together and with the assistance of the United Nations Development Programme and International Maritime Organization (UNDP-IMO), they are ensuring that sustainable development becomes an integral part of Bataan's masterplan for the future. A major result of this commitment has been the formulation of the Bataan Coastal Strategy, a blueprint for nurturing the province's abundant resources. This document was the product



Bataan Gov. Ding Roman, BCCF President Malu Eml and Bataan Mayor's League President Jose Alejandro Payumo III symbolize the public-private partnership during the presentation of the Bataan Coastal Declaration

of a number of multi-sectoral consultations and stakeholder involvement.

Barely over two years into the BIGKIS-BATAAN program, Bataan finds itself reaping a windfall of achievements, such as generating thousands of volunteers for its Kontra Kalat sa Dagat and mangrove reforestation drive, educating its residents on the value of nature, building new partnerships and strengthening existing ones, formulating solutions to avoid conflicts among the many users of its natural resources, and helping a bigger cause of cleaning Manila Bay. Not to mention the awards that it has received

along the way.

On June 10, 2002, Bataan will take centerstage in the global arena as it receives the

International Gold Quill Award of Merit for Kontra Kalat sa Dagat at the IABC Conference in Chicago, Illinois.



Mariveles Mayor Angel Pelliglorio is joined in the Kontra Kalat sa Dagat by volunteers from various sectors of society in a showcase of dynamic partnerships among all stakeholders.



Bataan's Rhollie and BCCF President Malu Eml receive for the province its 2nd consecutive Anvil Award of Merit for KKD.

List of Activities - 2002 Observance of "Araw ng Kagitingan"

March 18-27	8:00am-5:00pm	Film Showing Provincial Tourism Office
April 6-8	8:00am-5:00pm	Kagitingan Photo Exhibit 24th IB-Bataan Bulwagan ng Kapayapaan
April 3	9:00am	History Quiz Department of Education "Ang mga Kagitingan ng Bataan"
April 4	2:00pm	Clean & Green/Coastal Brgy. BTCFI/GSP Building Awarding Ceremonies
April 5	11:00am	Bataan Veterans Fellowship Veterans Federation of Bataan
	8:00am	South Border Concert J. Tancious Enterprises Bataan People's Center
April 6	4:00pm	Bataan People's Center Boxing Championships
April 6-7		Military Vehicle Parade 24th IB-Bataan Municipal Veteran's Celebration Municipal Mayor's League of Bataan
April 8	7:00pm	Bataan Strikes Back Concert Open House Enterprise Bataan People's Center
April 9	8:00am	Araw ng Kagitingan Mt. Samat, Pilar, Bataan
	9:00am	Bataan's Petron First Aid Diwa, Pilar, Bataan
	2:00pm	"Rise in Bataan" Symposium Bulwagan ng Kapayapaan

PETRON

There's a lot of service we do outside our stations.

PETRON FOUNDATION

Service is in the heart of everything we do. Not only is this apparent in our products and services, but also in our employees' drive for public service. That's why we have the 14-year old motorist assistance program, LAKBAY KALAT, and environmental projects like KONTRA KALAT SA DAGAT (coastal clean-up) and PUNG NG BUHAY (tree planting). And that's why we also support HABITAT FOR HUMANITY and LAKBAYANIHAN medical missions to communities across the country. All these borne out of a heartfelt desire to serve the Filipino.

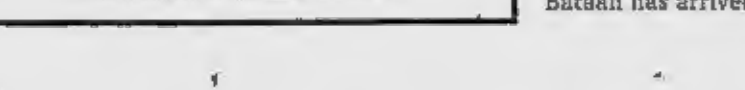
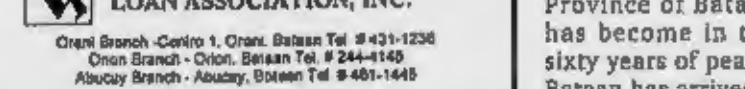
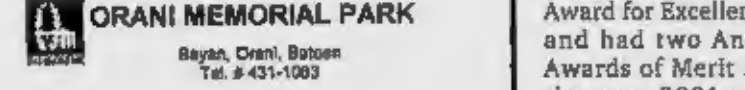
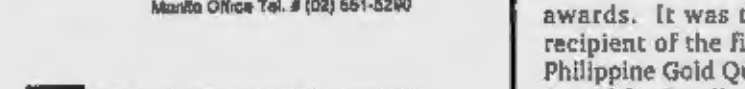
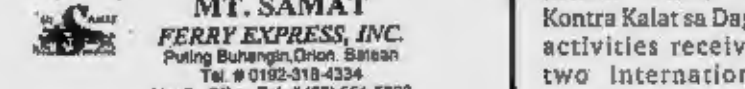
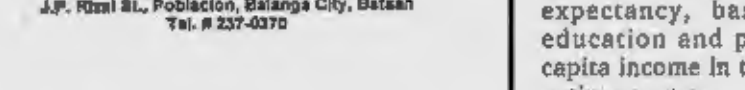
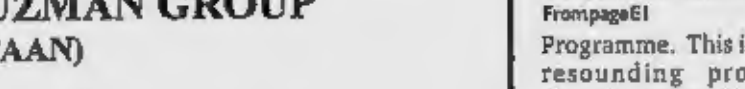
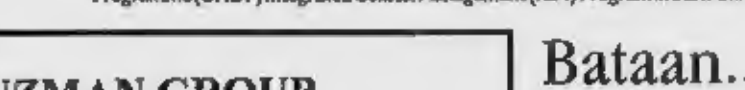
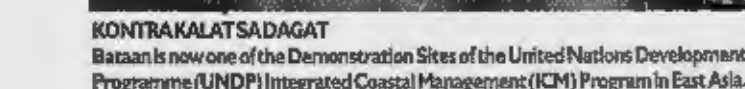
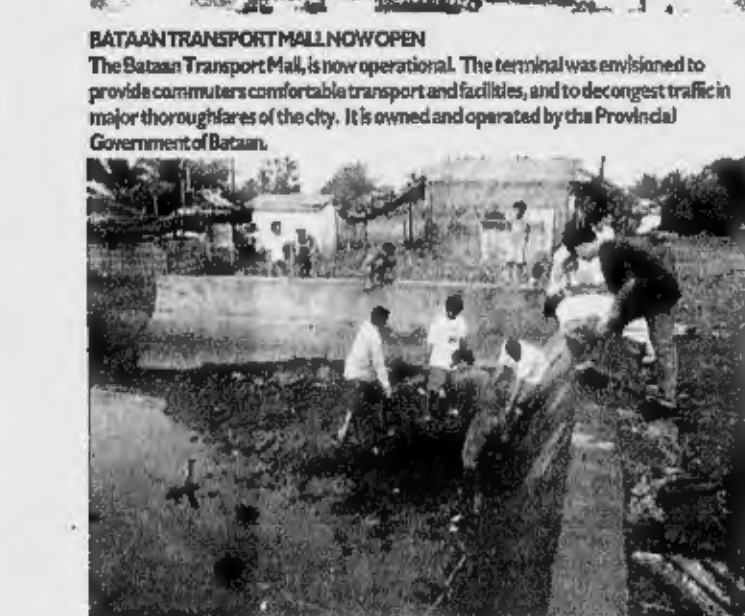
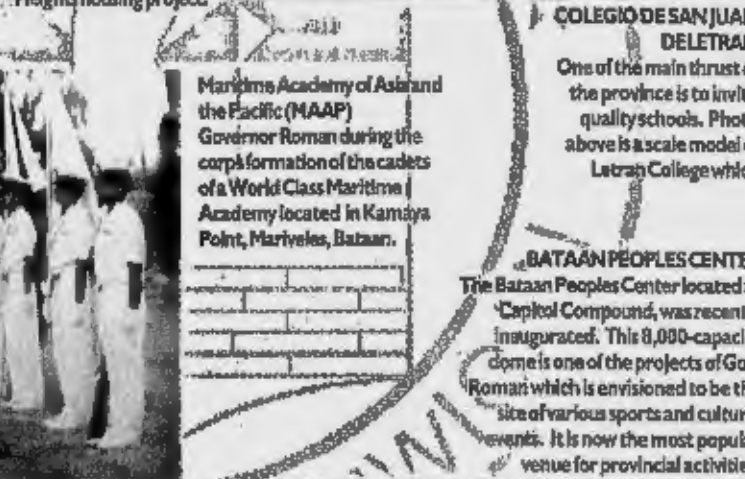
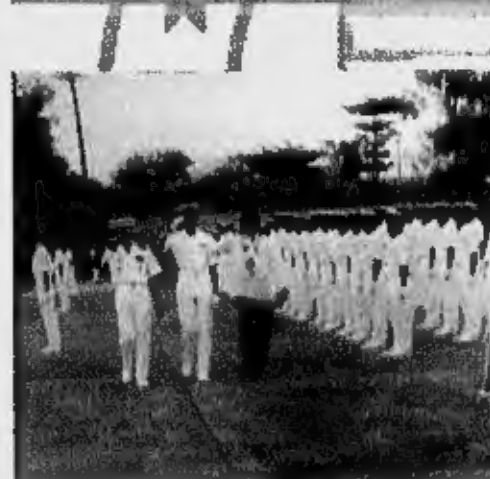
Pusong Pinoy. PETRON



**Nakikiisa ang PNOC
Petrochemical Development
Corporation sa Paggunita ng
Kabayanihan nating mga
Pilipino sa**



**ARAW NG
KAGITINGAN**



GREETINGS ON THE COMMEMORATION OF
THE 60th ANNIVERSARY OF
BATAAN DAY

AND

ARAW NG KAGITINGAN

FROM:

PHILIPPINE RESINS INDUSTRIES INC.

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PLANT OFFICE:

PPDC Petrochemical Industrial Park, Batangas Dos, Mariveles, Bataan
Tel No.: (047) 244-6406
Fax No.: (047) 244-7108 / 244-5976



GREETINGS ON THE
COMMEMORATION OF
THE 60th ANNIVERSARY OF
BATAAN DAY
AND
ARAW NG KAGITINGAN

from: **BATAAN POLYETHYLENE CORPORATION**



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Fax No.: (632) 848 2197

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to our customers' diverse needs.
Working together, we provide
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in Polyethylene resins to the Philippines,
and the rest of the world.



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Orani Branch - Orani, Bataan Tel. # 244-1145
Abucay Branch - Abucay, Bataan Tel. # 401-1445

Bataan...

From page E1
Programme. This is a
resounding proof
that the province of
Bataan has the high-
est level in life
expectancy, basic
education and per
capita income in the
entire country.
Our care for the
environment is just
as important. The
Integrated Coastal
Management Pro-
gram of the
Provincial Govern-
ment and the Bataan
Coastal Care Founda-
tion has gained
international recog-
nition when it's
Kontra Kalat sa Dagat
activities received
two international
awards. It was the
recipient of the first
Philippine Gold Quill
Award for Excellence
and had two Anvil
Awards of Merit for
the year 2001 and
2002.
This is what the
Province of Bataan
has become in the
sixty years of peace.
Bataan has arrived!